



**2019 SPRING
PROGRAM NEWS**

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EDITORS

- Patrice Klein*
- Stacey Bieler*
- Pat and Mary Barrett*
- Raj Wiener*

2019 Spring Newsletter
Community Volunteers for International Programs



You are invited

*CVIP Annual Meeting
and Salad Luncheon*

Wednesday, May 8
11:30 am – 1:00 pm

University Lutheran Church
1020 S. Harrison Rd.
East Lansing

Please join us as we recognize
outstanding volunteer contributions,
honor scholarship recipients, and
celebrate program successes

In keeping with tradition,
please bring a salad for the potluck lunch
(Plates, tableware, beverages
and dessert will be provided)

HOME VISITS

This semester our popular Home Visits program took place on a beautiful Spring-like day on Thursday, March 28. We worked with representatives from VETP, VIPP (Visiting International Professional Program) and I SPEAK programs to invite students and scholars who are here for a relatively short term and who might not otherwise have an opportunity to visit an American home.

Volunteer drivers and participants gathered at University Lutheran Church before going to their assigned homes for an afternoon visit. Eighteen students and scholars visited one of five volunteer homes. *(continued—p. 2)*

427 N. Shaw Lane, Room 300 F International Center
East Lansing, Michigan 48824
(517) 353-1735 cvip@msu.edu www.cvip.isp.msu.edu

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Lisa Homeniuk, CVIP President

“Differences in habit and language are nothing at all if our aims are identical and our hearts are open.”
JK Rowling

In these turbulent times, it is imperative that we continue to treat all with civility. In 2016, the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) launched a “YOU ARE WELCOME HERE” marketing campaign. It concisely summarizes their primary goal in their work with international students.

As we have for over 50 years, CVIP continues to support OISS with programs that serve MSU international students and scholars and their families. From July 2018 to March 2019, more than 945 students/scholars have directly benefited from CVIP activities carried out by over 350 community volunteers.

CVIP is grateful for the support and assistance we receive from the International Studies and Programs Dean’s office, including staff and interns from OISS. We are pleased to welcome the new OISS director, **Krista McCallum Beatty**, who met with the CVIP Board members at the March meeting. Thanks also to the University Lutheran Church for providing meeting space for our Board meetings and the Annual Meeting/ Luncheon.

We also count on continuing support from community members. Please consider becoming more active with CVIP and/or encouraging your friends and neighbors to get involved. To learn about opportunities to help, go to cvip.isp.msu.edu and click on “Community Volunteers.” Complete the general application to volunteer, and you will be contacted by a Board member to help you find the perfect fit for your time and interests.

In the last few months, some CVIP members who have served on the Board for several years have retired from the Board. Thank you to **Rick Emerson, Peggy Arbanas, Mary Barrett, and David Horner** for all the time and energy they shared with us. The late **Carol Towl** will forever be in our thoughts.

We hope you will join us for the **CVIP Annual Meeting and Salad Luncheon** on Wednesday, May 8. (See the invitation on the first page for details.)

HOME VISITS *(cont’d from p. 1)*

As always, the host families were most welcoming and shared their homes and interests with their visitors. Refreshments and lots of stimulating conversation were enjoyed by all.

Thank you to **Barbara Sawyer-Koch, Stacey Bieler, Val and Jerry Nilson, Trudy and Gary Sturk, and Alice Hamachek** for giving tours of their homes and providing tea and a snack. Thanks also to **Wendy Pope, Bernard Pope, Susan Ventocilla, Dottie Schmidt, and Barbara Tanaka** for serving as drivers.

The next Home Visits event will be in Fall 2019. If you would be interested in hosting a few students for an afternoon, or would like to be a driver, please contact one of the co-chairs below.

Program contacts:
Iris Horner (517) 349-1865
Wendy Pope (517)381-9039

Photos from Spring Home Visits



Students visited Barbara Sawyer-Koch's home with volunteer driver Wendy Pope and OISS Director Krista McCallum Beatty



Students at the home Jerry Nilson, center (his wife, Val, took this photo), with volunteer driver Bernard Pope

Sharing More than Kitchen Items!

The Lending Center lends a variety of household goods to MSU international students at no cost.

Not only do the volunteers at the Lending Center get to welcome new Spartans when they begin furnishing their apartments here, they get to celebrate with them when they finish their degrees. One woman from the Middle East, who was here with her four children, came into the center and told the volunteers quietly and proudly, "I've just learned that I passed my PhD." They responded,

"Congratulations! How long ago did you pass?" She replied, "Just now! My advisor called me. I had to tell someone so I came here to tell you!" Hugs all around! This new PhD had tears of appreciation for all that MSU, including the Lending Center, had done for her.

The students and visiting scholars appreciate being able to borrow daily living items rather than buy items for their short stays (3-6 months or a year) at MSU. They wait patiently in line in a room crowded by others who are also looking for items. One volunteer has heard from two students that when they return to their home countries, they would like to set up a group of volunteers at their university to offer such a service to others. In appreciation for the help they received from the Lending Center, an agricultural researcher from Pakistan and his family invited volunteers **Ann Wilde** and **Marge Weldon** to their apartment for lemonade & snacks.

Though there have been rumors that Spartan Village will be closing soon, the Lending Center has been told that we will be open there for at least two more years. We need floor lamps, lampshades for harp lamps, rice cookers, can openers, microwave ovens, blenders, routers, and small TVs. We have sufficient serving ware, glasses and table lamps at this time. We are happy to arrange for pickup of items at a donor's home.

We are open Tuesdays 1-2 and Thursdays 3:30-5 during the school year. You can drop off items and receive a receipt. If you have leftovers from a yard sale, are downsizing, or are changing your color scheme, please keep the Lending Center in mind for your donations. Also, we need more volunteers – if you are available once a month, please contact one of the program chairs.

Program contacts:

Barbara Sawyer-Koch (517) 775-6000

Marge Weldon (517) 582-1369

Stacey Bieler (517) 332-0464

VETP

The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP) matches community volunteers with international students and their spouses who want to improve their English conversational skills.

The Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP) recently hosted “Celebrate Michigan!” to show our international students and scholars all of the exciting things Michigan has to offer. Volunteer **Peggy Teoh** made detailed posters with information and pictures of Michigan lighthouses, the Mackinac Bridge, Lake Michigan, Fall colors and more. Participants took part in a trivia contest,



gathering information from the posters, in order to win a prize. In the background, a DVD about building the Mackinac Bridge played.

In addition, attendees enjoyed samples of Michigan-made food, including Jiffy muffins, Sanders candies, Kellogg’s cereal and Faygo pop. Boston coolers made with Vernors and MSU Dairy Store ice cream were a big hit (see photo in next column).



Afterward, Michigan travel information and maps were handed out. We hope that many people who “seek a pleasant peninsula” now know where to find one!

VETP is always looking for community members to be Conversation Partners. Volunteers meet with an international student, scholar or spouse for one hour a week, at a time and public location that’s convenient for both parties. Many VETP students say they have studied English in their countries for many years, but have never had a real conversation with an American!

Program contact:
Mary Hennessey vetp@msu.edu

CVIP Mission

Promote mutual cross-cultural education, understanding, appreciation and friendship between the Greater Lansing Community and MSU’s international students, scholars and their families through a variety of programs and services.

Global Festival Gift Shop

Are you in need of a didgeridoo (an Australian Aborigine musical instrument)? Or how about a hip skirt for belly dancing? You can find these items and many more interesting items at the Global Festival Gift Shop in the MSU Union each November.

When you are doing your Spring cleaning and running across all sorts of unique items from other cultures that need a new home, please think of donating these items to the Global Festival Gift Shop. We are interested in all kinds—small or large, including artwork such as paintings—that you may have collected over the years.

Proceeds from Gift Shop sales help to provide CVIP with funds for tuition scholarships for qualified spouses of MSU international students.

If you have items to donate to the Gift Shop, please contact one of the people listed below for pick up or to drop off. Thank you.

Program contacts:

Dottie Schmidt (517) 351-2812

Barbara Sawyer-Koch (517) 775-6000

International Spouse Connection

The International Spouse Connection (ISC) fills a need for contacts and socialization by international visitors who are in our community while their spouses attend MSU.

The International Spouse Connection (ISC) program has had some challenges in recent months, as attendance declined considerably over the winter. Thanks to additional advertising/outreach, the ISC held a successful pizza party on March 15. This was followed by a Bingo party on March 22, with eight in attendance.

Planning is currently underway for an active summer program to begin in early June.

Program contact:

Don Christenson christ10@msu.edu

517-339-2230



In Memoriam

We are sad to share that long-time CVIP volunteer and Board member **Carol Towl** passed away on February 28 after a cerebral aneurysm two weeks earlier.

For a decade, together with her various co-chairs, Carol was the guiding hand of the International Speakers Program, which she later renamed “I SPEAK.” She was often at the OISS Friday Coffee Hour meeting, recruiting international students to present for I SPEAK. Over the years, she strengthened the program’s outreach to community and University groups. Under Carol’s leadership, I SPEAK also enhanced its orientation and training sessions for new speakers.

The Allen Neighborhood Senior Citizen Coffee Hour, the International Interest Group of the MSU Community Club, and other groups requested speakers on a regular schedule. However, I SPEAK also maintained its original mission of providing a glimpse of a larger world for our local school students. For her many contributions, Carol received the CVIP Volunteer Recognition Award in 2010 and the prestigious Homer Higbee International Education Award in 2013.

Carol was involved with CVIP in several other ways, including staffing the Global Festival Gift Shop, driving students to Home Visits, and volunteering one day each week in the CVIP Office.

Those of us who knew Carol well wish to send our condolences to her family and to her husband, **Harold Sollenberger**, also a longtime CVIP member.

LILLIAN KUMATA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Lillian Kumata Scholarship Program awards scholarships to MSU international student spouses.

The Lillian Kumata Scholarship Program's Capital Campaign was launched in Spring 2018 with the help of MSU Development. Our endowment now stands at a little over \$86,840, an increase of over \$23,000 in the past year. Thank you to all who have donated to this campaign so far. Our goal is to reach \$100,000 by the end of 2020.

The Scholarship Fund was first established in 1970 with the purpose of enabling MSU international student wives to take a class or two. The theory was that if a wife was engaged in meaningful learning, she would be happier here in mid-Michigan. And if the wife was happy and content, then the husband would be a more successful student. Of course nowadays we also have many husbands following their student wives to our campus.

For Spring Semester 2019 we awarded two \$2500 scholarships. **Shengfang Song** from China is pursuing a Master's degree in Biostatistics and **Yezhou Liang**, also from China, is working toward a Master's degree in Marketing Research. Their husbands are both pursuing Ph.D programs in Mechanical Engineering.

If you would like to help support other worthy applicants, please donate today! Any amount, large or small, will be greatly appreciated. Send your check, made out to **Michigan State University** with "**endowment**" in the subject line, to the CVIP Office, 427 N. Shaw Lane, Room 300F International Center, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Program contacts:
Dottie Schmidt
dottieschmidt1854@gmail.com
Wendy Pope pope@pa.msu.edu

International Friendship Program

IFP matches international students with community "friends" who help the students learn about American culture and the greater Lansing community.

During the 2018-19 academic year, the International Friendship Program (IFP) matched 63 international students with local friends. The students came from 26 different countries, including Australia, Bahrain, Botswana, China, Congo, France, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Thanks to the community members who volunteer with IFP as friends, these students will leave MSU and the United States with a better understanding of our country and its citizens, and often with new friendships that will last long into the future. Similarly, community friends frequently stress how much they benefit from their friendships with internationals, as they learn about the culture and customs of the students' home countries.

For many of the 7,000+ international students attending MSU this past year, this is the first time they have lived in the United States or anywhere else outside their home country. By being matched with a local American friend or family through IFP, international students can experience our holiday and seasonal activities – such as Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas tree decorating, apple-picking in the fall, Lake Michigan beaches, or Fourth of July fireworks – and equally important, they can enjoy sharing dinner in our homes or conversations at a coffee shop.

We are always looking for new local volunteers to participate in IFP. Check out our website at cvip.isp.msu.edu and click on Programs, then choose International Friendship Program, to learn more and find our online application.

If you have previously participated in the program and are ready to be matched with another student this coming Fall, please email us (see below).

Program contact:
Larry Karnes lbkarnes@att.net
Or email: cvip@msu.edu

Cindy Walters Receives Globie Award

Earlier this month, OISS held a reception to celebrate the winners of the 2019 Globie Awards. These members of the MSU community have made a special effort to serve international students and scholars. Congratulations to **Cindy Walter**, a long-time CVIP volunteer and one of this year's recipients.

Cindy is an Academic Advisor, Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages. She and her family have served as friends with numerous international students for many years through the International Friendship Program. As a member of the IFP Committee, Cindy interviews students who apply for this program and works with other committee members to make good matches for these students with community volunteer friends.



*Cindy Walter and her husband, Todd,
with Rellika Kisyula*

Over the past 18 months, Cindy has gone above and beyond her normal job and volunteer role, providing extra support and assistance to **Rellika Kisyula**, her IFP student friend, who was seriously injured in an accident in the Fall of 2017. Her kindness and generosity during a very challenging time for Rellika made a strong, positive impact on him, and strengthened the friendship he already had with Cindy and her family.

Connie Wolfe Receives Homer Higbee Award

Congratulations to **Connie Wolfe**, who received the Homer Higbee International Education Award at the International Studies and Programs Awards ceremony in April.



*Connie Wolfe with several CVIP Board members
at the ISP Awards ceremony*

Connie has a long history of involvement with CVIP, beginning with serving as a friend to international students through the International Friendship Program. With the Volunteer English Tutoring Program, she has volunteered as both a conversation partner and classroom leader. Connie has also helped with I SPEAK and the Global Festival Gift Shop.

In addition, Connie has served on the CVIP Board for several years. Last year, she organized focus groups with students and community members to get their ideas and perspectives on CVIP. The information from these groups was indispensable as the Board reviewed the organization's goals and objectives at its annual retreat in September 2018.



We hope to see you
at the
**CVIP Annual Meeting
and Salad Luncheon**
Wednesday, May 8
See invitation on p. 1
for details

VOLUNTEER!

Learn more about
all CVIP programs
and complete the
online volunteer
application.

Please go to:
cvip.isp.msu.edu

I SPEAK

I SPEAK arranges for students to present talks about their country and its culture and customs to schools, community organizations, and other interested groups.

The word ‘change’ comes to mind when describing the recent happenings in the I SPEAK program. Because program coordinators **Carol Towl** and **Connie Wolfe** both planned to be away from the area for the winter, CVIP Board members **Carlos Fuentes** and **Laura Bowman** stepped in to provide temporary leadership. Severe weather prompted the cancellation or postponement of some of our events. With the unexpected passing of Carol, a huge gap has been left in the program.

Despite these obstacles, I SPEAK has enjoyed an active semester. Six international students attended our February 6 Orientation and Pizza Supper (students pictured here, with Carlos Fuentes) and many signed up for speaking events. Many thanks to **Joy Shantz** and OISS for their practical and financial support of this event.



During the first three months of this year, nine student speakers participated in a variety of speaking events. Home countries represented by these speakers included Uzbekistan, Tanzania, Taiwan, Lebanon, China, Pakistan, Argentina, and Vietnam. The speaking venues included the Allen Senior Center, the MSU Community Club's International Interest Group, South Lansing Kiwanis Club, Holt Lions Club, Eaton County Youth Facility Alternative High School, and Burcham Hills Retirement Center. Several additional speaking engagements are scheduled for the final two months of this semester.

If you would be interested in helping to coordinate the I SPEAK program, please contact one of the people below to learn more about this rewarding program. To volunteer to drive international students to speaking events, visit our website, cvip.isp.msu.edu, and complete an online application for ‘Community Volunteer.’

Program Contacts:

Laura Bowman bowmanlm@gmail.com

Carlos Fuentes uentes@msu.edu

Connie Wolfe cvbwolfe@comcast.net