



CVIP Spring 2015 Newsletter

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP)

This spring, **Mark McCarthy**, one of our VETP tutors, taught an undergraduate class in the College of Education about diversity in children's literature. He required his students to join VETP so they could meet someone from another culture.



Students in the class were interviewed, given a brief orientation and a packet of resources to use, and then matched with an international student or scholar. The students and their partners will also share a children's book from their culture, with the help of an MSU Librarian.

Several undergraduates who participated in VETP recently found it to be a very rewarding experience. One American student said he had never met anyone from Vietnam prior to being paired with a student from that country. They have become good friends, and he writes, "I have still been seeing Truong about once a

week and will be around all summer to continue hanging out with him. We already have plans to go fishing on the lake my parents live on in Laingsburg and play some beach volleyball out there."

Two other young men have also become friends. The American student writes: "Lei and I plan to meet this coming semester. We met a few times over break and will continue to do so. In fact, just this Thursday he passed his speaking test allowing him to be a TA. This is awesome news as it was his third time taking it and possibly the last time he is allowed to do so. I can't thank you enough for linking me up with Lei. Our friendship is mutually rewarding and I truly enjoy learning and teaching with him."

A female student shares: "Katerine and I met on Friday at Starbucks at 5pm and we ended up talking until 8pm! We got to know each other and we enjoy being each other's conversation partner!" (*cont. p. 2*)

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

Wednesday, May 13
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.

CVIP Newsletter Editors:

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

President's Corner



Stacey Bieler, CVIP President

With the international student and scholar population still growing at MSU, there are many opportunities to connect with students from around the world.

Are you looking for an opportunity to grow and serve? Please consider expanding your involvement by joining one or more of the CVIP programs described in this newsletter. What dreams do you have for CVIP? Drop us a line to tell us what programs you would suggest.

Please tell your friends about the importance of CVIP in the lives of the international students and scholars as they adjust to and thrive in our community. If you are interested in joining a marketing team of volunteers for CVIP, email me at jsbie@earthlink.net.

We welcome **James Dorsett**, the new Director of the Office of International Students and Scholars, to our campus and community. We look forward to working with him as well as continuing to work with **Joy Walter**, OISS liaison to CVIP.

Thank you to all the program chairs who have organized the various programs this year. Thank you to the board members who have

completed many of our 2014-15 goals: updating evaluation forms for program chairs and student participants, updating job descriptions, clarifying the budget process, and revising the CVIP Constitution and By-laws.

Thanks to **Rick Emerson** who led the Strategic Planning team this last year, and to **Jim Stedman**, the new chair of the Homes Visits program.

We hope you can join us at the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on May 13. Come meet the Lillian Kumata Scholarship awardees! Congratulate the winners of the CVIP Volunteer awards. Enjoy the luncheon and warm conversation.

VETP *(continued from page 1)*

We still count on adult community members to be tutors, since some international students ask for more “mature” conversation partners. More and more undergraduate international students are asking for VETP tutors because the program is not only a good way to practice their English, but also a way to make an American friend.

VETP has recently formed an Advisory Committee, made up of tutors who represent many aspects of VETP (classroom tutor, conversation partner, undergraduate, long-time tutor, etc.). The committee will work together to plan social events, get-togethers for tutors, and help with office tasks.

VETP is always in need of more conversation partners. If you'd like to meet with an international student or scholar for one hour a week to help with conversation, pronunciation and American culture, contact **Mary Hennessey** at vetp@msu.edu.

Students Enjoy Home Visits

Do you like to meet new people from many countries in the world? Home Visits provides students from the VETP and the A+ English Language School an opportunity to visit an American home. Conducted twice a year in April and October, we've had over 70 students participating in recent events.

Many American homes are significantly larger than many of our international students would be used to. They will enjoy seeing your furniture, art work, and the size of your yard. They may wish to see your closets and laundry room, but you don't have to show them! As students tour a home, they are interested in how many people live in the home, what each room is used for, and what room do you use most of the time. You may set your dining room table as if you are having company. These visitors will be thrilled to learn about your home, and share as much about your day-to-day activities with them as you are comfortable with. They may wish to have their picture taken with you.

This is an opportunity for the students to practice their English. Some may be shy introducing themselves. But you can hear many stories. A young Brazilian man told about his first trip to Northern Michigan to snow ski--he was thrilled and so excited. A young Chinese man who went to the Detroit Institute of Arts was surprised by the beauty and diversity of the art on display. One young lady from Japan said she was so afraid to come to America because of all the crime reported in the media; today she is pleased to be here and says American people are so nice and friendly. A small portion of the friendliness is welcoming these students into our homes.

Take this great opportunity for you to ask questions about their countries. Having an atlas or globe handy gives them a chance to share about themselves and their culture.

Students and scholars want to learn more about their new home. Sharing our family and our everyday experiences gives them insights into a new culture.

If you would like to be put on the contact list for October's home tours, please send **James Stedman** an email at jas12745@aol.com or call 248-568-7717.

A+ English Language School

This has been a great year for A+ English Language School. We have helped over 150 students this year and our preschool program is full! We started a wonderful book club and evening classes.

Our students have visited the Michigan Capitol, a grocery store, and a 4th grade classroom. Our other spring activities include CVIP Home Visits, Fenner Nature Center, our International Fair and a visit to the Michigan Historical Museum. Our ukulele orchestra is growing and ready to perform at the spring potluck.



Mitsuko Marx Wins 2015 Homer Higbee CVIP Award

For the last twelve years, Mitsuko Marx has contributed significantly to the success of almost every CVIP program. Mitsuko is most closely identified with recruiting and driving for the I SPEAK program, pricing goods for the Global Festival World Gift Shop and working at the Lending Center. She is also active with the International Spouse Connection.

Although Mitsuko served as CVIP Treasurer for several years, she has described herself as a "foot soldier" working "in the trenches." She prefers to seek out those programs that could benefit from her participation.



Homer Higbee's daughter, Marge Weldon (L) and Mitsuko Marx, 2015 Homer Higbee Award Recipient

Mitsuko understands the difficulties of being a newcomer to the American culture. She has helped take children of international families for immunizations, helped families enroll their

children in school, translated at doctor appointments, and most importantly, has become a listening ear when no one else seemed to understand. Her warm, outgoing and engaging personality serves her well. Congratulations!

CVIP Lending Center

The CVIP Lending Center continues to attract repeat visitors, new visitors and donors. **New 'n Crew** at the MSU Department of Communication Arts and Sciences is planning to run their Summer 2015 Lending Center Donation Drive April 20 - August 7. Over the past few years, they have collected many necessary housewares for us from the MSU faculty and staff. We treasure their assistance. Thank you to all of them.

We still need all the donations from CVIP supporters to prepare for another busy fall. Please continue to bring in your non-electric donations to the Lending Center located at 1434 F Spartan Village. If you are using GPS, enter 77 Middlevale Rd., East Lansing. We prefer to take in donations during our open hours of 1:00 -2:00 on Tuesdays and 3:30 - 5:00 on Thursdays, but contact us first just to be on the safe side.

Remember, we are a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. We will be happy to give you the documentation you will need for a tax deduction.

We do close during June and July for restocking. However, we are happy to set appointments during those months or at other times, if our open hours are not convenient for you. Contact **Erika** at enwank@yahoo.com or 517-351-4548 or the CVIP office at 517-353-1735 or cvip@msu.edu. Please leave complete information so we can return your email or phone call.

CVIP Welcomes James Dorsett, New Director of OISS



James Dorsett has been named the new Director of the Office for International Students and Scholars, effective March 16. For the last nine years he directed a similar office at Iowa State University,

which serves 4,500 international students and scholars.

He completed his bachelor's degree in history at Baylor University and holds master's degrees in Russian history and higher education administration, both from Indiana University-Bloomington.

When OISS interviewed him, he said that for his next travel destination, he would like to go to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Egypt on an ancient history tour.

Scholarship Committee

Our committee is proud to provide tuition support to four very deserving women for Spring Semester 2015 through offering them CVIP Lillian Kumata Scholarships.

Clara Mwaba Kaputo from Zambia is a Master's Degree student in the Higher Adult and Lifelong Education (HALE) program. She has a Bachelors Degree in Agriculture Economics from the University of Zambia. When she returns home she wants to train the extension agents who work with small-scale farmers. Her mother is one of these farmers.

Shaimaa Elzeini is an electrical engineer from Egypt and the mother of five children. She is interested in using technology and developing software for educational animation programs

for Arabic speaking children in Egypt. She is currently taking Lifelong Education classes and hopes to earn a Master's degree in a new program, Media and Game Design, in the Telecommunication Department.

Meng Zhao from China has a Bachelor's Degree from Beijing Normal University in Management Information Systems. She is working on a Master's Degree in Statistics and Probability. Her goal is to be a business data analyst and offer high quality and low cost service to Chinese start-ups and small businesses.

Fatou Faye from Senegal plans to finish her PhD in French and Francophone Literature this Spring Semester. Her dissertation is "Women and Islam in Senegalese Literature: Perceptions of Islam in Novels by Women Writers." She plans to teach and to share her knowledge with women who may be facing social, cultural, economic and political discrimination.

The four awardees are all married to husbands in PhD programs at MSU.

For more information, please contact the co-chairs, **Peggy Arbanas** at 669-1239 and **Dottie Schmidt** at 351-2812.

International Spouse Connection

The International Spouse Connection meets year round to provide a place where spouses of MSU international students can make friends, learn about their new home, learn about the cultures of their fellow ISC members, and practice their English. Spouse leaders **Stéfanie** (Brazil), **Araceli** (Mexico) and **Patty** (Nicaragua) help to plan and lead the meetings, which take place at Friendship House, 929 Sever Drive, East Lansing, on Fridays from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

As Spring Semester began, ISC welcomed six new members from six different countries, including Turkey, Namibia and Germany. We took advantage of a sunny January afternoon to go sledding on a hill near Frandor. On another field trip, we enjoyed a guided tour of the MSU Museum, resulting in many great photos of elk, bear and dinosaur bones posted on members' Facebook sites.



Our Indonesian members **Desi**, **Ira** and **ELin** (yes, that is how she spells it) taught us about Indonesian history, culture and food, while **Mickie** gave us lessons on folding beautiful origami figures. **Paola** led our Valentine's Party and enlightened the group on how Americans celebrate Valentine's Day. Our members asked to learn about volunteer opportunities, so we invited **Judi Harris**, Refugee Services

Director at St. Vincent Catholic Charities, to speak to the group about ways of helping refugees new to the Greater Lansing area. Our last meeting before Spring Break was a potluck at **Jan's** house – great food was enjoyed by all!

We welcome all international spouses to join us for fun and interaction with people from other cultures. For more information, please email us at isc@msu.edu.

Global Festival World Gift Shop

The World Gift Shop, held at the MSU Union on November 23, was successful, raising more than \$5,500 this past year.

Many thanks are due to **Gengen Chan**, **Mona Brandou** and **Mitsuko Marx** for the hours they spent pricing and packing donated items. We had more than 110 boxes plus other large items! **Carlos Fuentes** and his helpers were again very efficient in transporting everything to and from the Union.

Thanks are due to **Dottie Schmidt** for organizing community volunteers and to **Joy Walter** for arranging student help.

All proceeds are designated for the Lillian Kumata Scholarship Fund, which offers scholarships to spouses of MSU students. If you would like to donate international items to be sold at the World Gift Shop at the Global Festival in November 2015, please contact **Dottie Schmitt** at 351-2812. Cash donations are also welcome. For more information please contact **Wendy Pope** at **381-9039**.

Save the date: Global Festival, Sunday, November 22, 2015, from 12 to 5 pm, at the MSU Union.

I SPEAK Volunteers Enrich Holt World Language Week

I SPEAK volunteers like Holt High School World Language Week, held in March. We have participated every year for eight consecutive years! Each spring, **Karen Holman-Cervera** and her foreign language teacher colleagues at Holt High School take a break from teaching grammar and vocabulary. They invite MSU international students, visiting scholars and exchange students to the school to give presentations about their homelands.

Holt High School offers classes in Spanish, French and German. The high school language students welcome any international visitor (not just Spanish, German and French) and enjoy learning about a variety of cultures. Each year a T-shirt is designed to be worn by the students and is given to the international participants as a token of appreciation.



Participating as I SPEAK volunteers this year were **Katayoun Bahrami** (Iran), **Saya Kaneda** (Japan), **Chiadika Nwanze** (Nigeria), **Sergio Polimante** (Brazil), **Yamina Lordemus** (France), **Amal Matovu** (Botswana) and **Fatma AlSaif** (Saudi Arabia). Of course, the learning is reciprocal as the international visitors mingle with the Holt students, learning from them and seeing their state-of-the-art high school building. After all, cultural exchange is what CVIP is all about!

Our culture exchange continues as our international volunteers interact with folks of all ages in the local community, from young students at Montessori Public School in Okemos to senior citizens at the Allen Neighborhood Center.

Would you like to participate?

Consider inviting an international speaker to make a presentation to your group. Volunteer as a driver and meet an international student or scholar in the process. We need community volunteers to provide transportation for international speakers from campus to the locations of their assignments in the greater Lansing area (no further than 25 miles from MSU).

Please contact **Carol Towl** at 517-882-4391 or at ispeak.cvipmsu@gmail.com or **Mary Hennessey** at vetp@msu.edu, if you'd like to share in the enrichment MSU's international students and scholars bring to our community.



International Friendship Program

During the current academic year, more than 7,600 international students are attending Michigan State University. While these students are here to earn degrees or complete special programs, they also hope to learn about American culture. For most of the students, this is the first time they have lived in the United States or anywhere else outside their home country. Unfortunately, most of the students will not have the opportunity to visit an American home or interact with community members who are not associated with their academic program.

The International Friendship Program provides participating international students with the opportunity to get to know members of the local community and learn about American culture and traditions. Hopefully, 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.

How do community friends benefit from these relationships? First, we can learn about the culture of the students' home countries, including their foods, customs, and lifestyles. Secondly, we can have fun sharing examples of our American lifestyle, such as inviting students to participate in our holiday activities (Thanksgiving dinner, decorating a Christmas tree, Fourth of July parades and fireworks, etc.).

We may enjoy conversation at a coffee shop or share dinner in our homes, or attend concerts or sporting events. For a student from a large city elsewhere in the world, just observing a star-filled night sky or the Aurora Borealis for the first time can be a rewarding experience. The possibilities are endless and may be simple or more formal.

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.

To get involved in IFP, check out our website at www.cvip.isp.msu.edu/friendship, which includes more information about the program and an on-line application. We are currently accepting applications for participation beginning with the Fall semester.

If you have previously participated in IFP and are ready to be matched with another student, there is no need to re-apply. Just send us an email at lbkarnes@att.net or leave a telephone message at the CVIP office (517-353-1735).

Remembering Arline Roe, IFP Supporter

Arline Roe, age 98, who passed away on March 10, 2015, was active in the Central Methodist Church. She served on the CVIP Transportation Committee in the early 80s. She was also the representative to CVIP for Church Women United for ten years (1999-2009).

Many years ago the Roe family hosted three Taiwanese students. Arline stood up for one of them when he became a US citizen. Her family also hosted IFP students from Pakistan, Iran, Japan and Norway. Many remained family friends for over 45 years.

