

Sept/Oct. 2004 Communiqué

<http://www.CCISstanford.org>



Community Committee for International Students at Stanford University

CCIS Programs

Associates + Cooking + Community Advisors + English Classes + English-in-Action + Homestay + Hospitality
+ International Women's Circle + Loan Closet + Professional Liaison + Spouse Fund

COMMUNITY ADVISORS at work...

—by Betty Ogawa and Bernie Greenberg

CCIS is busy preparing for the arrival of the new international graduate students, scholars and their families. Twenty-six CCIS volunteers who have been trained as “Community Advisors” will be greeting approximately 600 new students from September 13 to 24, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the Bechtel International Center. They will provide the newcomers with informative handbooks and other materials that will help them get settled at Stanford. They will be counseled on Orientation Week events, driver's licenses, bank accounts, housing, shopping, how to get social security numbers, etc. and their many questions will be answered.

Community Advisors will also obtain emergency and visa information from the new arrivals for I-Center staff.

All international students, including those staying with Homestay hosts, are asked to register with a Community Advisor at Bechtel International Center as soon as possible after their arrival. Homestay families, please facilitate this contact. <>

THE LOAN CLOSET . . .

Community Advisors will be telling new international students about the *Loan Closet*, but Homestay Families may want to assist their students in getting to the Loan Closet where items for setting up housekeeping may be borrowed. There are pots and pan, dishes, toasters, irons, sheets, blankets, pillows, etc. The one-time fee for borrowing items is \$10 per student or \$20 per family. Appointments for visiting the Closet may be made at Bechtel International Center. The *Loan Closet* (which is in the basement of Abrams Highrise in Escondido Village) will be open 10-4PM most days from September 15-27. Also, more volunteer help may be needed for these few September days, so if anyone would like to volunteer to help sign out items to the Internationals, please contact Chula Morel-Seytoux at 650-366-1407. <>

CCIS – What it Means

The Community Committee for International Students (CCIS) is a Mid-Peninsula volunteer group, established in 1953, which works closely with the staff of the Bechtel International Center in providing services for international students, senior research scholars and their family members during their stay at Stanford University. The current “I-Center” opened in 1963, and is named in honor of Stephen and Laura Bechtel who generously contributed to the remodeling and restoration of the building as a facility for international exchange at Stanford.

Currently, more than four thousand international students and scholars attend Stanford. The members of CCIS welcome new foreign students as they arrive, assist them in various ways while they are living in the area, and through person-to-person friendship help to promote good will and understanding between these international sojourners and their U.S.

CCIS – What it Does

• New-Student Services

CCIS offers the following opportunities to foreign students and scholars new to this campus:

- **Homestay** – Students live with a local family for a 3-5 day period prior to Stanford registration.
- **Hospitality** – A local family includes internationals in their activities throughout the year, such as an occasional dinner, picnic or holiday celebration.
- **International Center Activities**
CCIS volunteers assist with activities sponsored by the staff of Bechtel International Center, such as:

—continued on page 5

The President's Column . . .



It is an honor to imagine that one could join the ranks of the people who have given their time and energy to lead CCIS. Yes, it will be work and some nervous sweat, but I am in awe of the people who step in to take care of what needs to be done. It can't be that bad. The really scary part is to contemplate that they may tire. That's where you come in.

In our database are 718 names. They have come from everywhere. From fifty years ago when CCIS provided hosts for students who wanted a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. And from people who by surfing the net lucked on to a request for volunteers. That desire, the desire to meet with intelligent, hard-working people from other countries is the magnet that draws us to the I-Center.

718. That's impressive. What does it really mean? There are somewhere between 250 and 350 volunteers who meet weekly with their EIA partners. We don't know exactly how many because we are better at matching than at data collection. People who start meeting don't check in every week. When the volunteer calls the office and says, "My friend has left. Can you get me another partner?" that's when Joyce Garbutt, our EIA chair, knows that she can make another match.

718? About two hundred respond to the Membership letter each July. You would think that we would give up on some, but we're as tenacious as telemarketers. Last year 195 made a financial contribution. As important as that is, money isn't our biggest challenge. We don't spend much. In fact, more was granted last year by the Spouse Education Fund than was spent in the entire CCIS budget. That's as it should be. We are a giving organization. We volunteer. We offer our time, and there could never be enough money to pay for what people give.

718. That's how many will be sent this Communiqué. You are the chorus who are already building a community of people who want to understand each other. So what I ask of you is to talk with your neighbors, friends—anyone who wants to meet with an international. The parents with kids in school who think that it would broaden their children's view of the world. The people in business whose job requires an understanding of the culture of another country. The humanitarians who despair of the violence in the world and who must, they just must, find international friends who want a more peaceful world. You get it. You don't need preaching. Please talk with people for whom we can make that connection.

600+. That's the number of graduate, post-doctoral, and visiting scholar internationals who arrive at Stanford each year. Add their families and you have a whole fistful of people.

Call 650-326-5252, or email me at president@ccisstanford.org

John Heron

CCIS Board

CCIS Office 650-326-5252

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president@ccisstanford.org

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..... Mary Ann Saunders

..... Karen Sortino

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English-in-Action Joyce Garbutt

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Friday Morning Coffee ***

Historian Mary Pat Gaspich

..... historian@ccisstanford.org

Homestay Usha Sekar

..... homestay@ccisstanford.org

Hospitality Usha Sekar

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Professional Liaison Carolyn Gannon

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Publicity Karen McNay

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*** position open

I-Center Staff

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ablizard@stanford.edu

Marga Castaldini, Rm. Res, 8 AM-Noon
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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISORS

Students with questions regarding their visa status, employment, etc.

Rolando Villalobos
visa@leland.stanford.edu

F-1 visa holders (I-20); J-1 visa holders (IAP-66)

Lynn Kroner
lynn.kroner@stanford.edu

F-1 visa holders (I-20)

Anna Puigdollers
Reception/Information
annapu@stanford.edu

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR ADVISORS

Visiting professors or researchers holding an H-1 or J-1 visa

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lee.madden@stanford.edu

Kayleen Joyce McDonald
kjoyce@stanford.edu

Brian Groves
bkgroves@stanford.edu

ADVISOR TO INTERNATIONAL FAMILIES

Programs offered by I-Center and other University offices; adjusting to life in the US

Gwyn Dukes
gdukes@stanford.edu

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Dinner/Discussion series and other programs for professional and academic international visitors

Jennifer Laine
jlaine@stanford.edu

I-CENTER COMPUTER SERVICES

Website setup and maintenance, etc.

Shirley Harris
shirley.harris@stanford.edu

OVERSEAS RESOURCE CENTER

Information about scholarships such as Fulbright, Rhodes, Marshall, Churchill, NSEP and/or non-Stanford study-abroad programs. Passport photos.

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I-CENTER HOSTS

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International Center Director Pearson

As we begin a new academic year at Stanford we are once again preparing to welcome many new international students and scholars. Over the past few months there have been numerous articles in the press concerning declining applications to U.S. institutions from international students as well as tales of students and scholars having to wait for months to obtain visas to come to the U.S.



Stanford has witnessed a decline in applications from international graduate students. Overall it has not been a dramatic decline but there is a variance between countries. What we do not know yet, is just what the final effect will be on new enrolled international students. My best guess is that there will be a slight decline from last year. Having said that, we still expect to welcome approximately 800 new international students, undergraduate and graduate.

Why is there a decline in applications? It is very hard to focus on one cause. Among possible reasons could be: increasing opportunities within certain countries (China, India) that may be reducing the goal of studying in the U.S., increased recruitment from certain countries such as U.K., Germany and Australia; and, perceptions and reality about U.S. visa processes.

It is also true that Stanford students and scholars have witnessed delays in obtaining visas. This applies to new students and to students who have traveled home and need a new visa to return to their studies at Stanford. If there is a bright side to this serious problem, it is that the numbers of such delays are small compared to our total student and scholar population. At any time we are trying to solve between 5 to 10 such cases. But each case involves someone's life and dreams so numbers do not tell the entire story. Each year we also have to deal with students whose visa requests are denied for various reasons.

If I had a point to make with this background it would be to once again underline the important work of CCIS in providing such a warm welcome to our international students and scholars, both new and returning, many of whom have had real struggles in finally being able to arrive at Stanford and begin their studies. We appreciate all you do at this important time of the year and I know the students and scholars do as well.

With very best wishes,

John Pearson

Communiqué: How long have you been a CCIS volunteer, and what drew you to give your time and energy to CCIS?

JH: My wife told me about a luncheon put on by her friend Nan Prince for an EIA partner who was on a Knight Fellowship from Japan. Six women gathered to discuss how people in our two countries were supporting their aging parents—a problem of intense interest to the Japanese. My wife came home excited and felt we should get involved in EIA. So when I retired from teaching high school history about five years ago, I dropped by the I-Center to see if I could get an EIA partner. Vivian Blomenkamp and Chula Morel-Seytoux were here. The enthusiasm of these two women is contagious, and you can't leave the building without accepting a job to help somewhere in the program. Like most of our volunteers the impetus seems to come from a combination of interest in people of the world and learning from friends about the opportunities in CCIS.

Communiqué: You clearly feel the rewards of connecting with Stanford international students and visiting scholars, as well as their spouses. Your wife Sharlyn is now also an active CCIS volunteer. Is there a particularly memorable experience you've had as a CCIS volunteer that you'd like to share?

JH: Only one? Well, it will be more personal than dramatic. When my EIA partner from Istanbul, Mevhibe Cinar, became pregnant we had a weekly chance to talk about the developments that were taking place. She, her husband Yildiray, and I talked over questions—like what color of clothes do you buy if you don't know the gender, how would the baby's life be different if she were a girl rather than a boy in Turkey and here in America. With both societies in transition, our answers to the second question were more speculative. Traditions, however, have a stronger hold. Since a Turkish baby doesn't leave the family home for the first forty days of life, seven weeks

passed before, at a lunch in Tresidder, Esen Meltem Cinar (their new baby) and I could be introduced. None of this will change the international relations between our two countries, but imagine. Here you are, sharing one of the great experiences of life with people from a faraway, almost exotic, place. What are the chances of that happening for a middle aged, mono-lingual American male?

Communiqué: What advice would you have for a community member who is considering becoming a CCIS volunteer?

JH: Have fun. Consider it an adventure of discovery. Don't be surprised if you find that when it comes to human relations not only do people around the world have similar problems but even our solutions seem amazingly alike. When it comes to questions such as what anyone's government is doing, reflect on your own thoughts. Identify them as such, and you'll get along fine. In a few years you can have twenty friends in eight countries. Having spent hours in conversation, these are people you know well. It would never have happened for me without CCIS.

Communiqué: You have recently become President of the CCIS Board. Please share with us your goals this year for the organization.

JH: I think that the job of president is to serve as a facilitator. American partners, who do the real work, want things to run smoothly and problems to disappear. Fortunately, there are many, many people who serve as leaders to make CCIS the successful 52-year-old organization that it is. We will work on encouraging our members to let their friends know about CCIS. I know that it sounds like a Channel 9 promo, but despite the 250 people who volunteer for EIA, we can use more. <>

Communiqué: Thank you for your leadership and energy with the CCIS organization and all of the international students, visiting scholars, and their spouses that have become your friends over the years.

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Fall Volunteer Training

Thursday, October 7

10:00

Assembly Room at the Bechtel International Center

Refreshments will be served

This annual program is designed to help all volunteers in English in Action, Hospitality, and the English teachers. There will be a panel of international graduate students, post docs, visiting scholars, and their spouses who will discuss their hopes and concerns for their Stanford experience. Following the panel, there are break-out sessions for each program. It is a great opportunity to share ideas, pick up some new techniques, and renew acquaintances. We will have a limited number of temporary parking permits available that morning. If you will need one, please let us know. RSVP to either 650/326-5252 or president@ccisstanford.org. Car pooling helps.

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- **Luncheons and Receptions-** Volunteers assist in organizing and hosting luncheons and receptions for occasional special events.
- **Community Orientation-** Community Advisor volunteers advise newly arriving students of community services and facilities and answer questions concerning daily living and establishing a household upon arrival. CCIS volunteers lead tours of local points of interest for students and their families.
- **Loan Closet-** Small household items are available on loan to new students for a small one-time fee.

Instruction and Practice in English

Throughout the year, CCIS offers programs to help foreign students, scholars and their families to improve their proficiency in English:

- **English-in-Action-** A weekly hour of conversation is offered on a one-to-one basis between a participating CCIS volunteer and a foreign partner.
- **English Classes-** Informal classes meet weekly and provide an opportunity to learn about many aspects of American culture while practicing English conversation.

Family Programs

Certain CCIS programs are especially aimed at enhancing the life of family members of a student or scholar while they are living in the Stanford community:

- **Cooking Classes-** Participants prepare and sample foods popular in this country.
- **Professional Liaison Program-** International spouses are matched with a professional person in the same field.
- **Spouse Fund-** Small scholarships are offered to international spouses to attend local academic institutions.

Community Relations

Some CCIS programs are directed toward helping members of the local community learn to recognize, understand, and appreciate the differences in various cultures represented at Stanford:

- **Communiqué-** A CCIS newsletter is distributed quarterly to members and friends of the organization.
- **International Sunday Suppers-** These events facilitate connections between the local community and internationals.
- **Transportation-** Volunteer drivers assist new arrivals and provide transportation for excursions.

CCIS — How to Participate

The success of these programs depends upon active community interest and participation, either personally or financially. In return, the lives of volunteers are greatly enriched through these contacts with internationals and their cultures. Any person interested in becoming involved in these programs or in obtaining additional membership information may contact the CCIS office located in the Bechtel International Center, 650/326-5252.

Cheers for our English Teachers

—by Karen Sortino

A very popular CCIS program over the years has been the English classes. The purpose of these classes is language enrichment; it is a venue for internationals to improve their English in a nurturing environment. Teachers encourage self-confidence by getting students to speak and participate in relevant exercises, such as debates, role-playing, games and problem-solving activities. In the process of participating students learn about our culture, humor, institutions, customs and idioms. Another important component is learning about other cultures and making new friends.

Our volunteer teachers all have teaching experience as well as either a second language or experience of having lived in another country. This spring quarter there were 11 classes, ranging in topics from Accent Reduction, American Idioms, Conversation for Everyday Living to American Customs and Institutions. Currently there are 12 teachers and 11 substitutes.



CCIS English Teachers

Mary Ann Saunders, chair, on far right

Mary Ann Saunders, volunteer chair of the English classes, has an MA in ESL and teaches at colleges and businesses. Her class on “Idioms” has been popular since 1995. Mary Ann presents training sessions for the teachers and keeps teachers informed of relevant issues by her creative e-mails. Three of the current teachers, Elizabeth Proctor, Carolyn Kendall and Leon Fisher, have been teaching well over 10 years. Many teachers entertain their students in their homes on occasion, e-mail them about articles or events of interest, and occasionally become surrogate parents. Three cheers for our teachers, who prepare lessons, meet regularly on a weekly basis and give of their time and energy. Why do they do it? Because, they say, they get far more than they give from these interesting, bright, highly motivated students, who are truly appreciative for help in speaking our difficult language.

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2004.....**CALENDAR**



- Sept. 8 CCIS Workshop for Knight Fellows
- Sept. 9 Community Advisor Training, I-Center
- Sept. 13-24 Community Advisors Orientation of incoming Graduate Students, 9 AM--5PM, Mon.--Fri.: **I-Center**
- Sept. 15-21 Homestay
- Sept. 23 Academic Luncheon, I-Center
- Sept. 25 Bus Tour
- Sept. 27 First day of classes
- Sept. 30 CCIS Desk Training, 10-Noon, I-Center

- Oct. 7 Volunteer Orientation, 10 AM, I-Center
for English-in-Action, Hospitality, English Classes
- Oct. 14 Board Meeting, 9:30 AM, I-Center
- Nov. 14 Potluck/Music Night, Sunday, 6 PM, I-Center



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