

Fall 2007

Communiqué

<http://www.ccisStanfordU.org>



Community Committee for International Students at Stanford University

Hundreds move to Stanford Area

It happens every year, and we still don't have a convenient term to refer to all the international grad students, post docs, visiting scholars, visiting professors, their spouses and children. At least we have learned that "international" is a preferable term to "foreign" even though the old usage labors on in such phrases as foreign aid. The term alien may be reserved for those who must abduct their visitors—a technique not needed by CCIS.

What is it like to be welcomed?

The International's Point of View

Nan Prince has been teaching her Writing class for four years. The sign-ups have been so large that some quarters she has to divide the class and teach two sessions. Students write on assigned topics and read their stories out loud in class.

This fall Nan invited her students to write a short piece for the Communiqué. This is some of what was written.

The first day of our new lives

Nadine Miranda, a 29 year-old newly married spouse whose husband is working on an MBA, is from Brazil. A food engineer, she has worked in the R & D of biscuits, or cookies as we would say in America. She began her American journal shortly after she arrived.

We arrived in California on the 28th of August. Eliot picked us up at the airport

with his nice golden BMW in which we managed to fit our four pieces of luggage, four smaller bags and the three of us, by submerging me among the bags.

He took us to his lovely house first, then to an eagerly sought for restaurant after seventeen hours of airplane food. Refueled, we could enjoy the following moments sightseeing in the town where we were going to spend the next two years of our lives. University Avenue and its restaurants, the old movies cinema, the Yogurt Stop shop, and the Stanford Shopping Center were some of the recommended places to visit once we settled in.

Finally, we drove to Stanford University, and we

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Three times a year Dee Gustavson and Joy Rewick organize a Potluck Music Night for CCIS volunteers, the internationals we serve, and our guests. Folks bring a simple dish—enough to feed four to six people. There are salads, entrees, and desserts. CCIS provides coffee, tea, and punch.

People begin gathering at 6 o'clock, and dinner starts at 6:30.

At 7:30 we are entertained by musicians from all around the world. Pianists, guitarists, dancers. It's a fun evening for everyone. Please come.



Potluck and Music Night

Sunday, Nov. 18

6:00 – 8:30

Bechtel International Center

The President's Column

This fall has been a very busy one as usual with the arrival of the new international graduate students, scholars, and their families. Some of the new students enjoyed our **Home Stay** program and spend three to five days living with a local family when they first arrived. In mid September over a two-week period, fifteen CCIS volunteers known as **Community Advisors** welcomed over five hundred students to Stanford and the Bay Area. Each new student was asked to register according to new Homeland Security requirements and attend a mandatory workshop on "Maintaining Your Legal Status" held at the I Center. Community Advisors gave each student a packet with an orientation handbook and schedule, campus map, transportation information, I Center activities calendar, shopping guides, phone card, English classes schedule and CCIS programs.

The volunteers spent ten to fifteen minutes talking with each student about the campus and community, answering questions about living in the US.

The students were very happy to learn about CCIS, especially **English Classes, English-In-Action, and Hospitality**.

Many of our other CCIS programs worked hard to help the new students. Over two hundred fifty students visited the **Loan Closet** to borrow toasters, linens, dishes, pots and pans and other necessary items to furnish their new homes. About 500 students attended the **Academic Luncheon** and enjoyed the sandwiches, salads, fruit, cookies and lemonade prepared by CCIS volunteers. Fifty-three students enjoyed the **Bay Area Bus Tour** and spent a happy day touring the Cal campus and having lunch at the I House there, followed by a tour of San Francisco and a trip across the Golden Gate Bridge.

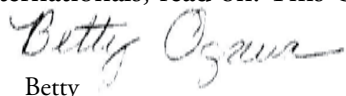
English-In-Action registered fifty-seven requests for partners by students their opening day. By November 10th the requests for partners reached 180. Many students have been matched but there are still quite a few on the waiting list.

Hospitality, Professional Liaison, and Spouse Education Fund have all been receiving applications from interested students. **Cooking Classes** have started up once again. The **CCIS Desk** is staffed daily Monday to Friday from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. CCIS is now in full swing helping the international students and their families at Stanford. As usual the demand is greater than the supply, and we always need more volunteers. Please consider taking on another EIA partner or helping with the CCIS desk to register students for EIA.

Coming up we have two fun activities for all the CCIS community and the students.

Don't forget the **Potluck/Music Night will be held November 18th**, and celebrate at the traditional **Holiday Party, Sunday, December 16th** from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M. at the I-Center. Everyone is welcome. Bring your international friends. There will be activities for the kids, music and lots of holiday cheer. Please bring snacks to share. I look forward to seeing you all at these events.

Well, this is the how the beginning of the new Stanford year looks from a CCIS point of view. To see what being welcomed to the Bay Area means from the perspective of the internationals, read on. This Communiqué is devoted


Betty

Community Committee for International Students

P.O. Box 20227, Stanford, CA 94309
Office phone.....650/498-5252
Websitewww.ccisStanfordU.org

CCIS Officers

President..... Betty Ogawa
650/321-3718 president@ccisStanfordU.org
Vice President..... Dave Gustavson
650/961-0305 vicepres@ccisStanfordU.org
Secretary.....Martha Enthoven
650/561-9064 secretary@ccisStanfordU.org
Treasurer.....Carolyn Gannon,
650/851-5528 treasurer@ccisStanfordU.org

CCIS Board

Associates.....Carolyn Gannon
650/851-5528 associates@ccisStanfordU.org
Academic Luncheon...Vivian Blomenkamp
650/322-7782 ala@ccisStanfordU.org
CCIS Desk Dick Hanavan
650/948-7312 ccisdesk@ccisStanfordU.org
Community Advisors Betty Ogawa
650/321-3718 ca@ccisStanfordU.org
Communiqué.....John Heron
408/836-8424 communique@ccisStanfordU.org
Cooking Class.....Dolly Sacks
650/948-0941 cooking@ccisStanfordU.org
English Classes Mary Ann Saunders
650/854-2840 englishclasses@ccisStanfordU.org
..... Karen Sortino
650/324-1466 englishclasses@ccisStanfordU.org
English in Action Marianne Dieckmann
650/857-0793 eia@ccisStanfordU.org
..... Mary Lyn Moseley
650/949-0711 eia@ccisStanfordU.org
Friday Morning Coffee....Chula Morel-Seytoux
650/366-1407 coffee@ccisStanfordU.org
Historian Mary Pat Gaspich
650/823-3443 historian@ccisStanfordU.org
Homestay.....Karen McNay
650//327-7041 homestay@ccisStanfordU.org
Hospitality.....Joyce Garbutt
650/367-6214 hospitality@ccisStanfordU.org
Loan ClosetIngrid Shen
650/323-7258 loancloset@ccisStanfordU.org
..... Marsha Alper
650/327-7412 loancloset@ccisStanfordU.org
Potluck Music Night Dee Gustavson
650/961-3539 potluckmusic@ccisStanfordU.org
..... Joy Rewick
650/254-0110 potluckmusic@ccisStanfordU.org
Publicity Mary Pat Gaspich
650/823-3443 publicity@ccisStanfordU.org
Spouse FundCarolyn Gannon
650/851-0319 spousefund@ccisStanfordU.org

I-Center Staff

P.O. Box 20227, Stanford, CA 94309
Main phone650/723-1831
Fax650/725-0886
Website: <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/icenter>

Administration

DirectorJohn Pearson
650/725-0889 john.pearson@stanford.edu
Associate DirectorShalini Bhutani
650/726-9511 sbhutani@stanford.edu
Office ManagerGrit Vig Find
650/725-0887 gfind@stanford.edu
Reception 8–12 P.M. ...Marga Castaldini
650/725-0879 margac@stanford.edu
Reception 1–5 P.M.Naja DiPilla
650/725-0879 ndipilia@stanford.edu

International Scholar Services

Lee Madden
650/725-0888 lee.madden@stanford.edu
Brian Groves
650/725-5053 bkgroves@stanford.edu
Lynn Kroner
650/725-0890 lynn.kroner@stanford.edu

International Student Services

Rolando Villalobos
650/723-1832 visa@stanford.edu
Laleh Rongere
650/723-1833 lrongere@stanford.edu
Junko Pierry
650/725-9553 junko.pierry@stanford.edu
Kathy Shek
kshek@stanford.edu

SEVIS/Immigration Data Manager

Vicky Bilimoria
650/725-0885 vickyb@stanford.edu

Office of International Families

Gwyn Dukes
650/723-1834 gdukes@stanford.edu

Office for International Visitors

Pauline Larmaraud
650/723-1984 plarm@stanford.edu

I-Center Computer Services

Shirley Harris
650/723-0377 shirley.harris@stanford.edu

Overseas Resource Center

Katie Route
650/723-0856 keroute@stanford.edu
Alex Nichol
650/725-0881 anicholl@stanford.edu

I-Center Hosts

Pum & Prow Tongliemnak
650/497-3996 pumsaran@stanford.edu
<http://www.stanford.edu/~pumsaran/>
Guest room phone: 650/736-1406

Social List Serv

<https://mailman.stanford.edu/mailman/subscribe/icenter-social>

International Center Director's Report

John Pearson is temporarily on assignment in another department. We expect his return in January.

Students and scholars hike to the dish

Among the many Wednesday hikes organized by Gwyn Dukes, was a walk to the dish. This photo is from a few weeks ago.



The International View (cont. from p. 1)

saw our dream coming true as the high palm trees beside us passed by, and we saw the main quad getting closer. We went straight to the student housing office to get the keys to our new home, and although we couldn't wait to see our apartment, we still passed by the I-Center to find out about the Loan Closet. As we entered the building, we fortunately ran into one of the volunteers who was just heading there.

They had a real treasure in that basement. For twenty dollars we could borrow dishes, glasses, pans, a toaster, a vase, towels, sheets, blankets, a vacuum cleaner, and...even a microwave!!! (for five extra dollars). It was the best bargain ever! Besides that, choosing among so many different options of utensils of all sizes and tastes and being able to take home our favorites was really a lot of fun!

When we left we realized that two hours had passed...

After the loan closet party, we went to visit our apartment and found another reason to celebrate. It was much bigger than we expected and had a large balcony facing the green treetops. I hugged Daniel as I imagined us living in our first own home.

Our first day ended with a wonderful dinner with our home stay family, talking about our lives in Brazil, theirs in the U.S., and our expectations for the future. Before falling asleep, the whole day screened in my mind and I was sure we could not have had a better start. I promised myself to try to make each day of our stay as exciting as the first, and to be able to remember the details forever, I decided to start writing this journal.

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The International View (cont. from p. 1)

Discovering Local Food

Raffaella Cerruti

Raffaella is from a small town near Genova, Italy. She studied agriculture in Pisa. She met her boyfriend at a wedding in Philadelphia and says that it was love at first sight, a fairy tale. So she moved here.

The impetus to choose such a topic comes from my home country. I'm Italian and so, according to the main stereotypes, very interested in food with a great taste. Further, as a woman, cooking dinners is one of my favourite jobs, especially when it is for your lovely boyfriend. I want to give a basic sense of how important it is to get good food. Further, more than museums, buildings and paintings, I have learned that culture and education mainly come in discovering local food.

The popularity of farmers' markets in California, where it is possible to get locally and organically produced foods, has reached also my country. And so like a quasi-religious ritual for me, as nature and culture are profoundly intertwined in such a simple act as buying fresh fruit, as soon as possible I sought out the farmers' market experience. I went to my neighbourhood market in Mountain View. It was Sunday morning.

From the first moment, what I found there was amazing to me. Sidewalks seemed to be too narrow considering how many people attended. It was incredibly crowded and noisy. Voices of all ages mingled in dozens of languages. The irresistible wish to buy everything we saw seemed pretty impossible.

Since I was disoriented by the people, we, my boyfriend and I, decided to survey the market and plan a shopping strategy. We strode rapidly through aromatic cheeses and breads, strawberry baskets, orange juice, and much, much more. Then we went into action. First stop: a stand for green vegetables to get a colourful bouquet of lettuce, tomatoes, broccoli, zucchini; with a nod of assent and a smile, the agreement was sealed. Meanwhile, a nectarines vendor on either side invited people to taste his fabulous nectarines, handing out

little pieces for sampling. I was astonished by the eagerness of people to get a piece of nectarine.

After that, we moved to the other stalls and only when we were no longer able to carry anything else we decided to come back home.

Colourful market scenes like this one are played out also in my country, but what I found out from this experience is that, rather than being a practice shared only among a special group of people, the "spirit of the field" seemed to affect everyone. In other words, I realized that the uniqueness of this place is the presence of "highly committed" consumers who search for organic and locally grown food.

Garage Sale

Jerry Hsieh

Jerwei came to the U.S. from Taiwan eight weeks ago. He lives in Sunnyvale with his wife and 2 year-old daughter. A visiting scholar in electrical engineering, he loves travel, photography, and ball games.

Moving into my beautiful apartment is one of the good choices I made since I came to US. However, the rent occupied the lion's share of my stipend, which forced me to



keep from lots of luxurious spending. As a result, I decided to spend only little money on buying necessary articles of furniture to furnish my apartment. Soon I found a good place to shop: the GARAGE SALE!

Generally, the articles in the garage sale (or

yard sale) may not so new or fancy as in department stores. However, most of them remain in good condition and are incredibly cheap, which is exactly what I need. The first Saturday I moved to my apartment, I spent almost all day hunting in garage sales. The first article I saw about was a deck chair. Reclining on it made me feel so relaxed.

"How much is it for this one?" I asked.

"Five dollars," the hostess replied. "It's a good chair."

"It's a pity that there are some ink spots on it," I pointed on the spots and said.

"Well, you can take this blanket to cover it."

"But it still costs 3 dollars," I replied. "Could I have the two items for 5?"

"You can. Only if you like them!" the hostess laughed.

That was my first bargaining attempt in the US, and soon I have a luxury deck chair in my living room! Thereafter, I bought numerous articles with very low prices, including a coffee table, a standing lamp, a Sony TV, a blender, and even a new mountain bike! Also I bought many toys and kid-clothes for my daughter. I never knew I could buy those name brands by only 50 cents each!

Now I already had enough furniture. Even though, I still often go to garage sales on the weekend. It's just like an entertainment combined with shopping and treasure-hunting. You can get lots of fun in bargaining with the hosts over the price. Rule number one: remember to cover cover your emotion when you find something you really want! It's also a pleasure ranging the neighborhood and suddenly finding a sign for a garage sale. However, be sure what you bought really fit your requirements, since they can not be returned. Are you ready? Let's go bargain-hunting in garage sales!

The First Friend

Naoko Abe

Naoko lived in Tokyo with her parents for 28 years. She came to Stanford last May with her husband of two months. He studies physics at SLAC. She loves reading, playing the piano, and yoga.

When I arrived in California, I didn't have any friends, even any acquaintances, except my husband. I was so homesick for Japan that I cried a little every day after he went to his office. But I never told him this because I knew he would worry about me.

One day, I took a walk in the neighborhood. When I passed in front of a big house, I noticed a middle-aged Asian woman standing on the side of the road and looking at me. She had a very cute puppy that wagged his tail and it also looked at me. The dog resembled my dog I had in Japan. When I went up to them, the dog jumped up and down excitedly. I enjoyed petting it.

The woman asked me where I was from and when I had arrived here. I answered that I was Japanese, and I had arrived here only a few days ago. She was surprised that I had come here only recently and invited me to her house. It was very close to my apartment. We enjoyed talking over a cup of coffee. She was Taiwanese and very kind to me.

Without self consciousness, I confided to her that I had a feeling of homesickness. She replied to me, "I had the same feeling as you when I came here 23 years ago. But don't worry!"

I was consoled by her words. Since that day, she often visits my house to see how I am doing. She is first my friend here. I really appreciate her.

Getting integrated through Bechtel International Center

Claudia Jockers

Originally from Bavaria, Claudia moved here from Hamburg in September. Prior to that she lived in France for two years. Her husband, a

physicist, is doing post-doc work. She was a high school math and physics teacher. As you can see from the photo she particularly loves exploring California's wonderful hiking trails.

We moved here September 2nd, two weeks before classes at the university began. My husband, who has a post-doc position at Stanford, was busy from the first day on. First I was afraid that I would get bored,



but that turned out to be wrong! During the first days, I spent a lot of time cleaning the apartment and buying more furniture. Moreover I explored the neighborhood and shopping possibilities for us.

Two weeks quickly passed. On my first "free" day, I went to the Friday morning coffee at Bechtel International Center. I was welcomed very cordially, and from the first moment I felt comfortable in the I-Center. I met lots of new and kind people and made friends easily. I still go to the Morning Coffee from time to time in order to chat with them.

After my first positive impression of the I-Center, I came back the next week to attend the English classes offered by kind and enthusiastic volunteer teachers (thank you so much!). Even though some classes are more appropriate for beginners, I still participate in (almost) all classes, not only because I enjoy improving my English and listening to English-speaking persons all day long, but also because I like to meet

my friends and to chat with them.

Besides the English courses, the I-Center offers a large variety of activities, and I definitely want to make the most of them. Learning other foreign languages, as well as taking cooking, dancing and drawing classes, is as attractive as the wide choice of different informational sessions and the Wednesday exploring tours.

I can recommend to all spouses of international scholars and students to come to the I-Center and to participate as much as they like. Furthermore I would like to thank all involved people for their enthusiasm and for the time they are spending to keep the I-Center so alive and helpful to us.

Farmers' market

Eunhae Park

Eunhae is from Korea where she studied traditional music and worked in radio broadcasting. She came in September.

When I came here, I didn't know where to go shopping or what to buy. My neighbor recommended the farmers' market. The farmers' market is held every Saturday near University Avenue and every Sunday near California Avenue. At first, my husband and I went there just to see it. But we began to fall in love with the farmers' market.

Eating local and organic food is not only good for health but helpful for local farmers and the local economic. At the farmers' market, we're able to buy local and organic food. When I found a vegetable which I hadn't seen before, I asked a farmer about the vegetable. Once he gave me some for free.

In Seoul, it was too hard to find local and organic food, because Seoul is a huge and complicated city like New York. If I wanted to buy organic food, I had to go to the farmers' co-operative market far away. This process was a troublesome thing and took a lot of time. They didn't have many items. Occasionally I wasn't able to buy a particular item that I wanted. Most of all, the prices were very expensive.

Now, it is my pleasure to go to the farmers' market every weekend.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
BECHTEL INTERNATIONAL CENTER · STANFORD UNIVERSITY
P.O. Box 20227
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94309-0120

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Fall/Winter Calendar

CCIS Activities

Potluck–Music Night, Sunday, November 18, 6–8:30 P.M.
Holiday Open House, Sunday, December 16, 3–5 P.M.
CCIS Board Meeting, January 10, 9:30 A.M.

I-Center Activities

For the constantly changing calendar check out
<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/icenter/events>.

Campus Activities (free and you are welcome)

Aurora Forum: Monday, Dec. 17, 7:30 - 9:00 P.M. (come early)
IRAQ: REFRAIME second of five public conversations with scholars, artists, and journalists whose engaged knowledge of past and present conflicts in the Mesopotamian cradle of civilization will reframe our understanding of current circumstances. For more information go to: <http://auroraforum.org/>

Cantor Arts Center

Several exhibits are discussed at <http://museum.stanford.edu/>



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Community Committee for
International Students
at Stanford

P.O. Box 20227
Stanford, CA 94309–0120
650/498-5252

<http://www.ccisStanfordU.org>

Betty Ogawa, President
John Heron, Editor