

Spring 2009

# Communiqué

<http://www.ccisStanfordU.org>



Community Committee for International Students at Stanford University

## 25 Years of Volunteer Service

### *An Interview with Dee Gustavson*

Dee Gustavson is a woman of many talents. She is an avid singer. In fact, she has been part of the Aurora Singers, a Palo Alto choir for the last 25 years. She dabbles in water colors and pen and ink sketches. In fact, she is actively involved with the Los Altos Art Club. She loves traveling and believes in promoting world peace. In fact, she has been part of Friendship Force since 1984. She is an avid gardener. She has a Bachelor's degree in German from Stanford University.

She has also been an integral part of CCIS for the last 25 years. She has served as CCIS Secretary, Vice President, and President. She has been our Activities Chair and chaired the EIA and Associates program. She has been integral in organizing the Potluck Music Night. She has hosted students from all over the world as part of our Homestay program. Sudarshana Banerjee of the Communiqué catches up with Dee in a candid conversation..

*What made you volunteer for CCIS?*

I was with my husband, Dave, a Fulbright scholar in Germany, when he was studying there. Germany was lonely. There was no campus as such and definitely no international center.

When I saw an advertisement for CCIS in The Stanford Daily in 1985, I could immediately identify with the cause.

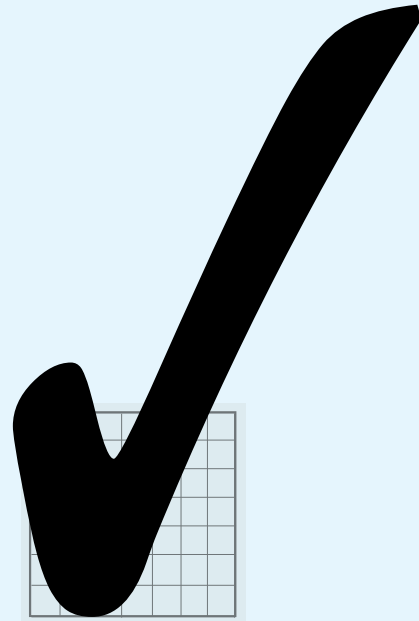
*You were part of the Homestay program from the very beginning...*

When I first joined CCIS, Alison Wells was part of the Homestay committee. We started matching students with hosts, and I could see what an important need our Homestay program satisfied. We were giving international students a first hand opportunity to learn about us, our culture.

Our first homestay guests were students from Korea and Belgium. Since then, we have hosted people from all over the world, including India, Japan and China.

➔Dee Gustavson: page 4

## Time for a check up



**CCIS Annual Meeting  
Wednesday, May 20**

**4:30 P.M.**

**THE ASSEMBLY ROOM,  
BECHTEL INTERNATIONAL CENTER  
JOIN PRESIDENT HENNESSEY FOR  
REFRESHMENTS**

# The President's Column

## Working with amazing people

Spring Greetings to all our wonderful CCIS volunteers! What a tremendous difference you make in the lives of international students and their families. I am continually inspired by the stories I hear from our students. They have been greeted at the airports, given a place to stay in local homes, invited for dinners and family parties, even been taken shopping and taught how to cook "American food" (please read the article by Dolly Sacks). It has been an honor to work with so many dedicated volunteers.

It is eye-opening to see the range of our interests and energy. Some of our members operate the Loan Closet like a store keeping supplies and recording transactions, some teach classes of American culture or language, many guide a partner through the intricacies of English in one-on-one conversation, some entertain at the Potlucks, some serve as downstairs receptionists for the I-Center, some match spouses who are pharmacists, teachers, or nurses with professionals in their own field, some host at the Friday Morning coffees, and some serve as officers to keep the whole show on the road. They're all having a great time. Amazing!

I have enjoyed meeting many of you already and hope to meet even more of our volunteers at our Annual Meeting on May 20. Why attend the Annual Meeting? It is a time to meet our current board members and to nominate next year's officers, as well as to hear about other areas of CCIS that you may want to get involved in. Following the meeting in the Assembly Room, President Hennessey will join us for refreshments on the patio to thank you in person for the time that you give to Stanford's international community.

Best Wishes,  
Martha Enthoven

## American Cook

*The last time we heard from Dolly Sacks, who teaches our Cooking classes, was in the Fall of 2006, when she wrote about her favorite family recipe called "Crummy Chicken." Since then she has continued to delight many others who like to cook. This time she writes,*

The first question that arises in the American Cooking Class is the hardest to answer – "What is American Cooking?" Someday we will have a contest to determine the answer. But for now, the closest thing to say is "Well, it's a combination of Spanish, Italian, French and whatever the cook wants to make."

At our twice weekly class, six to eight students assist in preparing lunches

which we then share over tea and conversation. I love this part because I get to know each of the students a little better."

There are favorite dishes which are pretty much the same in every class – crummy chicken, blackened catfish, apple crisp, any kind of cookie, and many different salads and soups. Requests for specific dishes are also honored.

One student sent a message after we had made the chicken and fish recipes. It read, "Dolly, I made the blackened catfish and my husband loved it. He said it was 'life-changing', and he hasn't even had crummy chicken yet.

How many teachers can say that?"

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## International Center Director's Report Spring at the I-Center

What a year we seem to be having. Economic downturns that affects all of us. While Bechtel will have some budget cuts I would like to note how we continue to increase our program and advising services. Our 2007-2008 Annual Report is available on our web site at [http://icenter.stanford.edu/about\\_us/annual\\_report/index.html](http://icenter.stanford.edu/about_us/annual_report/index.html)

Putting together an Annual Report takes time and effort but we feel it is well worth it. It allows us to develop a historical record of our challenges and accomplishments. We are especially pleased about the growth of small group meetings at Bechtel, including all the spouse programs and the discussion series. And while we do not produce an International Festival any more we do offer a series of events during International Week. We hope that you will be interested in attending some of the events this year. We are also especially proud of the number of Stanford students who have been awarded prestigious national scholarships for scholarships for study and research abroad.

Bechtel still focuses much of its work on advising about federal immigration regulations; it is a reflection of the world in which we live and the needs of a globalized university. Fortunately, as we advise students, scholars and departments about these issues, CCIS continues to bring the human touch to its interactions with our visitors from all over the world. We continue to hear from students, scholars and family members how much their friendship with CCIS members mean to them. I hope all CCIS volunteers know how much all of the staff at Bechtel appreciate your remarkable service to international understanding.

With very best wishes,  
John Pearson

### International Week... is an exciting time on campus.

Everyone is welcome. All events are free and will be held at the Bechtel International Center unless noted otherwise. All events are supported by the Billie Achilles fund.

- Saturday – May 9 Noon – 4 P.M.  
Japan Day will be an opportunity for people to have fun, eat Japanese food, and at the same time get some hands-on experience with traditional aspects of Japanese culture.
- Saturday – May 9 5 – 7 P.M.  
Taiwanese Night Market  
Location: White Plaza  
The Taiwanese Cultural Society presents its annual Night Market. Come enjoy free food and entertainment presented by all different Asian American groups.
- Sunday – May 10 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.  
Borrowed Fire  
Filmed in southern India, this documentary tells the story of the last surviving scholar-puppeteer.
- Sunday – May 10 7 – 10 P.M.  
Indian Music  
Location: A3C Ballroom, Stanford  
Hindustani Musicians will present a medley of Sarod, Flute and Tabla brought to you by famous Hindustani musicians: Pt. Nityanand Haldipur, Pt. Basant Kabra and Pt. Sadanand Naimpalli. Presented by Spicmacay Stanford
- Monday – May 11 7 – 8:30 P.M.

A Conversation with Reid Hoffman, Silicon Valley entrepreneur and founder of LinkedIn.

Mr. Hoffman will discuss how his tenure as a Marshall scholar at Oxford University contributed to his professional development.

• Tuesday – May 12 6 – 8 P.M.  
Beautiful Me: Finding Our Revolutionary Selves in Black Cuba – Documentary  
This intimate travel diary follows a diverse group of students from Yale University to Cuba for the field trip of a lifetime. Presented by the Caribbean Students Association and the Cuban American Undergraduate Student Association.

• Wednesday – May 13 7 – 8:30 P.M.  
Time for a Fresh Look at Immigration Policy? – Panel Discussion  
President Obama has identified comprehensive immigration legislation as a priority in his first year in office. What reforms can we realistically expect?

Panelists include David Figueroa (Consul General of Mexico, San Jose), Professor Dan Siciliano (Associate Dean and Senior Lecturer in Law), and Marc Van Der Hout attorney, Van Der Hout, Brigagliano & Nightingale, LLP).

Other events including evenings of music and dance from Turkey and Mexico, food from the Philippines and the “bamboo” dancing called Tinikling, Taiko drum performances, Persian Beshkan Academy dancers, panel discussions by students and alums about how their academic and research projects are helping them to change the world! More information: <http://icenter.stanford.edu/iweek/>





➔continued from p. 1,  
**Dee Gustavson Interview**



Chula Morel-Seytoux and Dee Gustavson at Potluck Music Night

A visit in a person's home is something people cannot buy. They have to be invited. They love to be invited, to be given an opportunity to interact and exchange ideas at close quarters.

*Your name has become almost synonymous with the Potluck Music Night. You have been organizing this for the last ten years. Tell us about it.*

I must say I have had tremendous support from Chula Morel-Seytoux and Joy Rewick. Dave has also been very supportive.

I got the idea of a Potluck Music Night from attending a NAFSA Conference (an International meeting of Foreign Student Advisors and Community Volunteers). I shared my ideas with Chula, who was excited about the plan and willing to try it, having organized similar programs in an university in Colorado.

I don't recall what was on the program for our first Potluck in 1998, but it must have been successful enough to make us try it again the following spring.. We used to have one or two such evenings every year, and then we graduated to hosting one Potluck Music Night every quarter.

*How has the Potluck Music Night evolved over the years?*

The main difference is that in the

beginning, most of the Potluck music nights were held in the Assembly

Room, because it seated more people. Now, if there was a pianist performing, we would have to shift the audience to the Living Room, where there was a grand piano.

These days we host the Potluck Music Night in the Living Room (there's no longer a piano in the Assembly Room). We like the more intimate, salon-

like atmosphere. When there's a big crowd, the audience overflows into the Dining Room.

There is better publicity now, primarily because of the advantages of the Internet. The I-Center sends out the schedule of events every week via email. In later years, Naja DiPilla started making some lovely posters for us.

The attendance varies a lot. In the beginning, we were thrilled if we had 50 guests, but in later years, we've often had 75. Once we had about 120, and that was a challenge. People were hanging from the rafters. We were constantly replacing the table service and looking for chairs. People had to eat dinner in the English room and on the stairway.

*Do you have a favorite memory of one of these nights you would like to share with us?*

The most exciting Potluck Music Night for Dave and me had nothing to do with music or potluck.

We had waited all day to hear of our granddaughter's birth. All through the program we had our cell phones on silence, and were on pins and needles awaiting the news. Finally, just after the program ended, we got a phone

call at 9 P.M., with the news of Mia Cheryl's birth.

The clean-up volunteers were terrific, and said, "We'll finish the work here; you go to the hospital to see your first grandchild!" They didn't have to beg. We were out the door within five minutes, and off to the hospital to hold that new baby!

*How does it feel to have your other-half Dave as part of the same board you have been such an integral part of?*

I'm really pleased that he's gotten involved, and that we have a new common interest.

He's always supported me in my CCIS activities in various capacities, from technical assistant, computer expert and photographer, to punch and coffee maker. He has also been supportive and helped me organize the Potluck Music Nights.

*What would you tell our new CCIS volunteers?*

You will meet such wonderful, interesting, vibrant people — in the community, and also among the international students, scholars and spouses. However much you're willing to give, you will receive even more.

Your lives will definitely be enriched by sharing your time and talents with them. Invite them over for tea; share your home with them.

Don't hesitate about volunteering in a new job. Just dive in!



Note: Dave Gustavson is currently Vice President, CCIS. He is also Membership Chair, and our Internet consultant.

## EIA Partner returning home? Why not ask for a new partner today? Fifty are waiting.

As always, the English in Action program has a very successful year! So far we have had approximately 230 Internationals sign up and a match up rate of about 75 percent. As always, however, we are still in desperate need of volunteers for those who have not been matched! Currently, we have over 50 Internationals still awaiting a partner. Most are from Asian countries, particularly Korea. And about half are spouses (some with children) and the other half are male graduate students and visiting scholars.

We have been posting ads on Craigslist for volunteers continuously throughout the year, and as a result have been quite successful in recruiting wonderful new volunteers from all backgrounds and industries. But, as you know, the parking situation around the I-Center during the day is just dismal. We are afraid we lost quite a number of you former volunteers because of it. And, as you know most of the Internationals do not have cars and can't meet you far away from Stanford. Still, we are asking for your help again! Summer is coming. Besides the usual meeting places at the Stanford Shopping Center, Town and Country, Starbucks at Stanford Avenue, etc. there are also several small parks in College Terrace and Peers Park on Park Ave where you could meet during the summer. And by the time Winter comes again, you and your partner might figure out another way to meet outside of Stanford at a warm place.

Also, to those of you who have had a partner for several years, we do thank you for your help. But would it be possible for you to meet less frequently with your current partner and take a second one for a once-a-week conversation? We and your future partner would be ever so grateful. :-)



## Spouse Resourcefulness Women Form a Book Club



Reading Group: Martina Micusikova, Chris Nolan, Hyeyon Moon, Hanny Kusnadi, Sabine Schneider

Coming to Stanford as a spouse of a student or visiting scholar can mean a huge adjustment in daily life and style—an adjustment that is often made nearly alone as the student member of the pair is absorbed into the academic life. But these are resourceful folks, many of whom are professionals in their home country.

With Gwyn Dukes encouragement during the fall of 2007, a reading group was formed by Tuija Berg-Toiviainen from Finland. Four people joined the first meeting and now 18 people participate. Even though Tuija has returned to Finland the group continues. Not all can attend each meeting, but they enthusiastically talk about books when they meet. They read one book in a month and meet every other Monday to share ideas and thoughts about the book.

As university graduates themselves, they have enjoyed reading translated American best sellers at home. Here, with people from all over the world, they have been challenged to read books from other countries which are translated into English.

Which books? Tuija, who wrote to her friends from Finland, said, “Some of you were from the beginning of the fall semester when we read Lisa See’s *Snowflower and the Secret Fan*. A few joined to read Greg Mortensen’s *Three Cups of Tea*. The next book *Digging to America* by Ann Taylor was a suggestion of Hyeyon and Lenka joined the group. *The Memory*

*Keeper’s Daughter* we discussed with Martina and had the biggest number (10) of members then. We watched it as a film too. Eva from Austria saw the film with Simone, Susanne and Lenka, and me. Mika from Holland suggested *Eat, Pray and Love* which we discussed it with Synnöve. It was Eunhae’s idea to read a classic next time. With Bente’s help we chose John Steinbeck’s *Tortilla Flat*. Sabine joined our group then. With Synnöve’s help we found the last book *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd. It was an excellent, actual choice because it told about South Carolina in the 60s and the era of civil rights movement. We only discussed the first half of the book and didn’t finish it together. The summer began and people were traveling, and I did a road trip of 4400 miles.

“I feel so sorry that I didn’t find time to organize the last meeting and finish the activity in a proper manner. Everything was left hanging in the air (it’s a Finnish saying when something has been left unfinished). I hope you understand what I mean.

“I had great time with you reading and discussing. Afterwards I feel proud of myself that I were able to do it in English—not perfect but understandably. All you guys were so great that I felt privileged and lucky to be a member of the international women’s shared leisure activity. We all share love for books and literature! By the way, Synnöve finished her second novel during this year in Palo Alto. Congratulations!!”

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## Calendar

**International Week: Saturday, May 9 to Sunday, May 17**

**Various locations**

**CCIS Annual Meeting: Wednesday, May 20, 4:30 P.M.  
Assembly Room**

**Stanford Commencement, Saturday, June 14  
Stanford Stadium**



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