



CCIS volunteers continue to serve international graduate students, visiting scholars and their families at Stanford University. Read about some of our programs and events!



“Notes at the Top”

Annette Isaacson
President

Yippee Skippee!

We just found out that Bechtel Center is re-opening to the public after a two year closure due to pandemic restrictions, and CCIS and Bechtel Center can once again hold **Friday Morning Coffee** in person starting April 22. The popular film series, **Windows on the West**, led by Bob Spears, will also be starting on April 22! Let your EIA partners and International friends know.

CCIS can also offer our popular **Homestay** program in the Fall. Calling all Homestay Hosts... Let Homestay Chair, [Liz Ambuhl](#) know. If you haven't yet tried out EIA, please consider doing so. This is my favorite CCIS program. My mother-in-law introduced me to this wonderful program over thirty years ago. I have three delightful partners this year!

Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting: May 16, 2022 from 4:30-6:00 P.M. We can't wait to see you again after these two long years.

Fondly,

Annette Isaacson
CCIS President

Thanks for being a part of CCIS and supporting our International Community at Stanford.
president@ccisstanfordu.org

Meet the Volunteer

An Unexpected Enduring Friendship



Juliet Johnson, co-chair of membership for CCIS, has been a volunteer in the English program. Below, in her words, Juliet describes her unexpected friendship with CCIS international Chen Chen.

Chen Chen was one of my students in the 2014 CCIS English Class. We met shortly after she arrived from China as a PhD candidate to work at the Stanford Medical Lab. We became immediate friends after she asked me to be her mentor and EIA (English in Action) partner. Chen is smart, friendly, always happy with a big smile, and extremely quick in handling any business project or giving a helping hand. She was popular and well known for her fast solutions to help anyone around her.

By 2016, she was the president of the Stanford Chinese Students organization, often picking up new arrivals at the airport and settling them into new homes, etc. As a result, she frequently brought newcomers and friends to visit our home. Dinners at our home included backyard BBQs and Swim Parties, which made us popular hosts, all because of Chen Chen.

In 2017, Chen returned to Shandong University in China to receive her PhD degree and soon returned to Stanford the next year as a post doc scholar. Her contracts as a post doc were extended due to her outstanding performances. In 2019, my husband and I invited her to stay with us. She started addressing us as Daddy and Mommy, which melted our hearts.

In 2017, Chen and her father came from China to Taiwan to join me on trip to visit my family in Taiwan. A couple of years later I visited with Chen Chen's parents in China. Traveling together solidified our connection. The fact that I am fluent in the same language which Chen calls her native language has made it much easier for both of us to understand each other's culture. This also eased the adjustment in her seven-year journey in the USA.

Meanwhile, we realized that she had begun to mature and enjoy much of the normal American pastimes, such as the classic concerts at Bing and summer outdoor jazz concerts in the parks. We shared many cooking experiences in our kitchen.

Much to our delight, she married a sweet young man and recently had a baby girl. She and her husband work at the Stanford Medical Lab.

We feel blessed to have Chen as part of our life since 2014. Our life has been enriched to a higher level with the gift of love not just from Chen, but from her parents as well. This gift from CCIS has changed our lives.

Two Remembrances

John Heron remembered

The CCIS organization recognizes the passing of John Heron. He was an active member of CCIS for many years, serving as President of CCIS from 2004-2006. His widow Sharlyn wrote "John loved the part that CCIS played in his retirement life and even years later talked about the many wonderful people he had met through the program."

Gwyn Dukes has contributed the following remembrance...

I knew John through CCIS over the many years of his active volunteer work there, and my time on the staff of the Bechtel International Center. In my mind's eye, I can still see him sitting at the desk in the I-Center entryway, talking with an English in Action partner or anyone who stopped by at Bechtel.

John's background as a teacher of history and government in high school made him a perfect person to help people from other countries understand American culture and our system of government. He enjoyed writing articles for the Communicate newsletter with interesting perspectives and tips for volunteers. In addition, he edited the CCIS print newsletter for many years.

John was a dedicated English in Action partner who formed firm friendships with his international counterparts. One Chinese student who wanted to honor him made a substantial donation to the CCIS Spouse Education Fund to show his appreciation for John's friendship over the years. John also collaborated with his Chinese partner in organizing a summer program for high school students from China.

John was always ready to explain various aspects of American culture and systems to internationals. He was helpful with the CCIS Professional Liaison Program for International Spouses, which gives spouses a chance to meet with fellow professionals from the local area. He was happy to meet with spouses who were teachers in their home countries to explain how the education system is organized in the US. He often gave them a tour of his former campus to visit a high school in person.

I feel sure that his interactions with the many people from around the world enriched their lives and aided in their understanding of the United States and American culture in general. They, and CCIS were fortunate to have John's enthusiastic and knowledgeable sharing of the local and national way of life and the traditions and philosophy underlying it."

Our condolences are extended to the family of John Heron.

[Read more information about John on the CCIS timeline](#)

Georgina Bailie remembered

Several months ago the CCIS board learned of the passing of Georgina Bailie, an early contributor and organizer of programs offered through CCIS. Born in Leicester, England in 1927, she became an aeronautical engineer at age 19. She met John Bailie in the summer of 1955, was married in January 1956 and the two emigrated to the USA a month later. In March 1959 they moved to Palo Alto, both to work at the Lockheed Missiles and Space Company in Sunnyvale.

During the 1960s she was active in the International Dames (also known as the "I-Dames") a group that created programs for the spouses of students from other countries. Weekly coffee hours provided participants a chance to get to know each other and share their cultures. The I-Dames even had a support program for pregnant spouses and new mothers.

Perhaps because Georgina knew what it was like to start anew in a foreign country, she felt it was important to create a welcoming and helpful community. Although "I-Dames" came to an end as an organization, many of the programs and ideas continue to this day through CCIS or the Bechtel International Center.

CCIS Board member Gwyn Dukes states "Georgina's leadership was key to organizing the international spouses to provide supportive programs for each other. I see her as a pioneer in mobilizing spouses to form a supportive community."

Georgina devoted several years to raising her family. She retrained as a computer scientist at Foothill College in the mid 1970s and enjoyed a long career in computer programming with Systems Control Technology in Palo Alto.

She and her husband became active in the Homestay program, hosting international students in their home when the students first arrived in the USA. Her daughter Jane writes "My parents always spoke so fondly of the welcome which they received from people affiliated with Stanford University and the Palo Alto community."

CCIS was privileged to film Georgina in her home, reminiscing about the students they had enjoyed hosting and showing the beautiful gifts from around the world that they had been given in return for their hospitality. This film was used on an early CCIS website to interest new volunteers in the organization.

Her legacy will carry on through donations that have been made in her name for the Spouse Education Fund, a program that will be explained in the May/June issue.

Our condolences are extended to the family of Georgina Bailie.

Vikram Seth A Homestay Surprise

A nice surprise happened while Gwyn Dukes was soliciting information from Georgina Bailie's daughter (see above article). We learned that one of the Homestay students Georgina and her husband John hosted is Vikram Seth, an Indian poet, novelist, travel writer, librettist, children's writer, biographer and memoirist. Georgina's daughter Jane writes, "Our family was delighted to meet so many interesting people through the Homestay program."



As a new PhD candidate in Economics (which he never completed) Vikram first stayed with the Bailie family, forging a longtime friendship. When Vikram visited Palo Alto he often included time to visit his former Homestay hosts.

Born in 1952 in Calcutta, India, Vikram Seth was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Stanford University and Nanjing University. His first novel *The Golden Gate: A Novel in Verse* (1986), describes the experiences of a group of friends living in California. Vikram is also the author of a travel book, *From Heaven Lake: Travels Through Sinkiang and Tibet* (1983), an account of a journey through Tibet, China and Nepal that won the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award.

The Homestay program will resume this fall, after a two-year hiatus. If you are interested in learning about this wonderful opportunity to help a new foreign grad student contact the [Homestay program](#).

A word from the editor

As the newsletter editor, I hope you will enjoy learning more about what's happening at CCIS. Your feedback is welcome, send an email to notes@ccisstanfordu.org.

Pamela Baird

CCIS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
CCIS Notes is published by
[The Community Committee for International Students at Stanford University](#)

For more information contact:
info@ccisstanfordu.org