



What is your name? Where are you from?

July 2013

My name is Okke Schrijvers and I'm originally from the Netherlands.

How long have you been at Stanford? And how long do you expect to be here?

I've been here since mid September last year, so that's about ten months now. I'm doing a PhD in computer science, so I get to hang around here for quite a few years to come :).

Are you a student or a spouse at Stanford? What are you/your spouse studying?

I'm studying here myself.

How did you hear about the CCIS? What do you know about the work they do with Stanford students and spouses?

I'm not entirely sure when I first heard about CCIS; either it was through an e-mail that I received prior to coming here, or from the Bechtel International Center website, but the first CCIS program I read about was the Homestay program. I know that other programs include the Potluck Dinners to get people from different cultures together, programs aimed at spouses so they can contribute even when working is not allowed by visa requirements, and programs to improve the English of all who are interested.

Which CCIS programs are you participating in and in what capacity?

I've personally only been involved in the Homestay program, but I feel that this has really contributed to my experience here. Karen McNay placed me with Donna and John Shoemaker who picked me up from the airport and welcomed me into their wonderful house for the first days of my stay.

When and how did you decide to participate in these CCIS programs?

I decided to participate while I was arranging everything for my visit here. I consider myself to be a social person and the Homestay program appealed to me for that reason, in addition to the obvious value of easing into getting settled.

How was your experience taking part in CCIS's programs?

I am very happy that I participated, and very thankful to Karen, Donna and John for organizing it and for hosting me. Donna and John are very experienced in hosting students, and that really brings calm in an otherwise turbulent time. I think it's very important to realize however that the largest benefits I've experienced as a result of the program have been after the program was over. Many of the people I have met during my stay at Donna and John's have become close friends of mine and whatever the occasion, you can bet on Karen to host a party for it.

What message would you like to give to the CCIS?

Frankly, I think in a very real sense, talking to CCIS is talking to the people who make CCIS possible. Without their efforts and passion for CCIS and its program, none of these would be a reality. I think they're doing an amazing job, both through the programs and outside them, and I honestly believe that they have had a profound positive impact on my experience here.

Okke