

# Communiqué

Community for International Students(CCIS) at Stanford University

FALL/WINTER 2008

## Thank you CCIS volunteers

By Martha Enthoven

Welcome to the Fall/Winter issue of the Communiqué! My name is Martha Enthoven and I am the new president of CCIS. (You can read more about me on the following page). For now, I would like to concentrate on thanking our wonderful CCIS volunteers for a great kick-off to the Fall Quarter.

Over 6,000 students and scholars arrived on campus this fall, and over 500 of these enjoyed an orientation offered by our Community Advisor volunteers at the Bechtel Center. The list goes on... 29 arriving students enjoyed a homestay with a local family; over 150 students have signed up for weekly language partners; more than 100 students were able to borrow things from our Loan Closet; and over 150 students are attending our English Classes.

Annie Nunan and Chula Morel-Seytoux hosted a fabulous Pot Luck Music Night on November 9th. These really are delightful evenings where our volunteers and students can mix and mingle and hear each other's stories, as well as enjoy delicious food from all over the world and listen to wonderful performers. Please join us at the next Pot Luck Music Night in February or March! Thank you Chula and Annie for all the great work.

CCIS has been serving the Stanford international student community for over 50 years and we really could not do it without such dedicated help from our volunteers. A warm THANK YOU to all of you.

## We did good! A look at the stats.

282 – EIA partnerships nurtured and continued
100 – students helped by the Loan Closet
40 – students enjoyed our Hospitality
170 – students taught spoken English in our classes
25 – students trained by our Cooking classes
29 – students hosted in friendly homes (Homestay)
300 – students attended the Potluck and had a ball
26 – Spouse Education Fund applicants
50 – Bus tour participants
524 – students attended the Orientation
150 – Information desk participants

We are always searching for new volunteers --- take a look at our programs list on the following pages. If either you or someone you know would like to get more involved, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Happy Fall/Winter and I hope to meet you at the I-Center!

## Joys of EIA and the Olympics

By Mary Lyn Mosley

We know how much joy and comfort our English-In-Action (EIA) program brings to Stanford University students (or



Water Cube: Thanks to EIA, I was here

visiting scholars, or spouses, as the case may be) and partners alike. How lucky we are to share laughs, trade stories and sometimes even exchange small gifts as token of mutual respect and appreciation, with people from all over the world. Who knew my new partnership would lead to the Olympics in Beijing!

One day my EIA partner, an Engineer (of course) from China and I were chatting away perfecting his English, when he asked me if I would like to go to the Olympics in Beijing this year.. This question was put to me quite casually, like would I like to

have some tea? My answer, of course, was yes. Yes, I would like to go to the Olympics this year. A lot of people would actually, but wishes are hardly Olympic tickets, I thought to myself.

"What would you like to see?" he asked. A look at the famous "Birds Nest" (National stadium)! "Okay," he said. And that was that.. Our conversation meandered to the usual discussions on the California real estate scene, shopping and such. He was looking forward to buying an engagement ring for his lady love, and we discussed that for a bit.

A few weeks later the said gentleman proudly presented me with tickets to the Finals of the Decathlon and the Walk, in where else? The Birds Nest!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Since I visit China quite frequently, my passport and visa were in order. Which turned out to be a really good thing, since once China stopped issuing visas, holding an Olympic ticket or not, no visa translated into a strict no entry.

I had a ticket for myself, and a precious second ticket to spare. Thank you EIA! I had remained friends with a former EIA partner who lives in Beijing. Of course I invited him. Visiting the Olympics is an incredible experience; visiting with a friend from the host country is unbelievably so. I met up with my old friend and we were off to see this extraordinary event.



The skies were a fresh blue. Beijing was absolutely gorgeous. The city looked scrubbed clean and new, and there were flowers everywhere we looked.. There were new subway lines built and one was dedicated just to the Olympic venue. We cleared security at the subway station. No liquids were allowed and a ticket to an Olympic event for that day was required for entry into this special subway. Security was tight.

As we surfaced, there was the Water Cube (of Michael Phelps fame) and the Birds Nest and outside an enormous track where the Walk was underway. We were able to be close to the athletes walking (running?) around the track. We cheered the Chinese, we cheered the Americans and in true Olympic spirit, all the athletes. It was amazing! A former partner and friend in China, a new partner and friend at Stanford and the bridge is EIA.

Now, inside the stadium, the Decathlon finals had begun. The American Bryan Clay (Gold medalist) was besting everyone. Our seats faced the Olympic Torch and if one stood in just the right place with raised arm, it looked like one was holding the torch. You can imagine the steady stream of spectators waiting to "hold the torch". The Olympian Walkers were now entering the stadium for the finish line to loud cheers. One by one, as they crossed the finish line, they collapsed to the ground. 50 km is really tough.

Returning home, I was filled with great pride and happiness for what EIA does. I gave English conversation and received the world in return. I am grateful.

My student has returned to his life in Beijing. He thinks EIA is so fabulous he wants to start a similar program -- Chinese-in-Action -- at his university. Maybe he should call it the CIA. Wait, I think that name is taken.

*(Mary Lyn Mosley is Member at Large, CCIS. She shuttles between different countries every week for work, but still makes times for us.)*

## From Martha's Desk

By Martha Enthoven

I am so impressed by all that the Bechtel Center and CCIS do to support the international families here at Stanford. I am delighted to have been asked to serve as President of CCIS this year. As I have yet to meet many of you, I thought I would introduce myself first.

I moved from Washington, DC to Menlo Park three years ago with my husband and our four children. In Washington, DC, I had been very involved with The Hospitality and Information Service (THIS), a group that coordinates with the State Department to welcome, entertain, befriend and assist our international diplomatic community. As soon as I moved to Menlo Park, a friend told me about CCIS and I attended a Friday Morning Coffee. I was instantly impressed with CCIS. This is a group of committed volunteers who make a TREMENDOUS difference in the lives of Stanford's international students. I am quite certain that the majority of Stanford international students will always remember their time on our campus as greatly enhanced by their CCIS friendships and experiences.

I am particularly touched by the outreach that CCIS does for young international mothers at Stanford. My third child was born in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, just three months after our arrival there. This

might have been an isolating time for me were it not for an energetic group of expatriots that welcomed all new arrivals.

I will always remember a beautiful Sri Lankan mother who taught me how to adapt to driving a gear-shift, right-hand steering car through the labyrinths of those Kuala Lumpur streets. Another group was all set up to assist newly arrived mothers-to-be to find appropriate medical care. Lastly, another lovely group of women hosted a baby shower for me, after only knowing me a month. These experiences re-enforced for me how important it is to reach out to new mothers who are far away from their original networks of support.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate CCIS Secretary Susanne Maas, from Germany, on the arrival in September of her first child -- a beautiful baby boy named Max. I also wish the best of luck to Gloria Chaw, co-chair for Professional Liaison, who is expecting her second child in January.

I look forward to meeting all of our CCIS members at some of the fun events we have coming up ahead. I thank you, as President of the organization, for your commitment to improving the experiences of international students at Stanford. You really do make a difference in these students' lives!

I wish all of you a Happy Fall/Winter!

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## **Recent News from Bechtel: John Pearson's column**

Let me begin by sharing some news about the Bechtel International Center as we step into a new school year.

Over the summer, the University renovated the downstairs bathrooms. They are much more spacious now and look quite good. We have new chairs for the Assembly and the Dining Room. The Back Lounge too is geared up for a new look with different furniture. Last but not the least, we are rethinking the way we display our artworks and posters. That still leaves us with one of our larger goals, the renovation of the large kitchen.

We still have our wish list of what we want to accomplish. We want to make sure our building not only has friendly and welcoming people, but looks tidy and attractive as well from the inside out.

We did a few things differently this year. As the years go by, all our programs need to be re-evaluated to make sure we are in the right path to what we want to accomplish.

We held a reception at the end of orientation week, rather than the beginning, this year. Attendance was high and we are very positive.

We did not host the Academic Lunch this year like we usually do. When we started holding the luncheon, our purpose was to bring together new and returning students from the same departments under one roof. We have found that many departments are offering similar programs now. Over the last several years, the luncheon had demanded a LOT of effort from CCIS volunteers. This year, minus that extra work, we could focus more time and energy on some of our other orientation programs, and we are very pleased with the positive response we got from our students.

Our international student orientation this fall was a success and we extend our thanks to all CCIS members who helped welcome new students. We have started offering orientation support to our increasing number of international undergraduate freshman students and their parents. We also hosted a very successful parents' reception.

We have been collating all our historical information and it is fascinating to read the story of CCIS and Bechtel over the years. It has been a wonderful partnership and long may it continue to the benefit of our international students and scholars.

*(John Pearson is the Director of the Bechtel International Center at Stanford University.)*



## Let us take a look at the various programs we have...

The Community Committee for International Students (CCIS) is a volunteer organization that supports international graduate students, visiting scholars and their families at Stanford University. Over the years, we have build strong bridges of friendships with students and spouses scattered all over the world. CCIS is known in almost every country in the map, and be it Afghanistan or Zimbabwe, you will find lives that CCIS has influenced.

If you are new to CCIS, and reading this, we welcome you into a family of several hundred volunteers. You will never be without a friend again. If you have been with CCIS for a while, you know of all this already, and we thank you for your support and for being such an important part of us. We could not have done it without you, CCIS volunteers! Please share this newsletter with your friends and families. Each academic year there are more and more students looking up to CCIS for friendship, support and comfort, and we could use all the help we get. Especially at the Desk, which is the first point of contact between an international visitor and us.

### English Classes



Each quarter of the school year, our volunteers offer informal, weekly classes in many different aspects of American culture and English usage. They are open to visiting students and their family members, and are absolutely free of charge. Class schedules are posted in the lobby at the I-Center.

Recently offered classes include invaluable training on how to shop for groceries, something, which even though is usually rather uneventful for us, is equally daunting to a student from (say) rural China. A simple question like "Paper or Plastic" can leave even post doctoral candidates in advanced computer science quite stumped, if they are unfamiliar

with the cultural mores involved in buying apples in an alien land. Some of our other classes focus on equipping our students with the basic understanding of ordering food at restaurants, or shopping. We also make sure our students get a grasp of American culture and idioms, of our life and our humor, our customs and subjects that affect us deeply (baseball, Tom Cruise's marital life, global warming, just to give a few examples).

If you would like to volunteer, or know someone who may be interested in getting involved, please get in touch with **Mary Ann Saunders** or **Karen Sortino** at [englishclasses@stanford.edu](mailto:englishclasses@stanford.edu)

### English in Action (EIA)

EIA offers conversation practice to students, spouses and visiting scholars who have a basic knowledge of English grammar and can construct coherent sentences, but cannot yet hold fluent conversations on various subjects.

EIA is one of our best-loved endeavors. EIA volunteers meet with students for roughly an hour every week and talk about anything (almost!) under the sun. Strong friendships are forged through chatting once a week, and several of our EIA partnerships have continued as friendships down the years, even when the student knows enough of the English language to converse freely, or has left the country and returned back to her homeland.

Some of our volunteers take on one partner, some of our volunteers have several EIA partners; working with them simultaneously to polish their speaking skills. Meetings are held at the I-Center, coffee shops, restaurants, while walking the campus grounds – in short, there are no rigid rules regarding where to meet with your EIA partner. It is however recommended that the first session be held at the I-center.

If you would like to volunteer, or know someone who may be interested in getting involved, please get in touch with **Marianne Dieckmann** or **Angela Lee** at [eia@stanford.edu](mailto:eia@stanford.edu)

### Hospitality

Holidays and special occasions are lonely times for some of our international students, who typically do not share American traditions and often feel isolated when everybody else around them are celebrating. Our volunteers at the Hospitality program are some of the kindest people around. They invite the students into their homes and include them in the festivities.

The Hospitality program is different from the Homestay program in that the students do not typically spend a few days with the volunteer's family, but a few hours.

If you would like to volunteer, or know someone who may be interested, please get in touch with **Joyce Garbutt** at [hospitality@stanford.edu](mailto:hospitality@stanford.edu)

### Homestay

Homestay is one of CCIS' oldest programs, dating back to 1953, and is a very popular program too. Local families welcome international students (or scholars, and sometimes their families) to their home for a three to five day stay prior to moving into their University residences. The host families help the students make the transition to life in the US, and many lifelong friendships are built from this experience. Students applying for Homestay are matched with participating families in late summer as the students arrive just before the start of classes in the fall (late August to early September).

If you would like to participate in this rewarding and

enriching program, or know anybody who might want to get involved, please contact **Karen McNay** at [homestay@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:homestay@ccisstanfordu.org)



## The Loan Closet

Students and families arriving at Stanford for months of academic grind could use all the help they get in setting up a new home here. The Loan closet loans out household essentials from toasters to tableware, for a token rent of \$10. The items are typically returned by the students at the end of their stay, and they usually add a few items of their own to the closet repertoire. Generous donations from our volunteers and friends also help us grow.

If you would like to donate a household item, or know someone who would, please get in touch with **Ingrid Shen** and **Marsha Alper** at [loancloset@stanford.edu](mailto:loancloset@stanford.edu)



## Professional Liaison

Most spouses of international graduate students and scholars are professionals in their home country, but due to visa restrictions they are unable to get a job here. These include doctors, computer specialists, teachers, television producers and directors, journalists, pharmacists, fashion designers, and many more.

In this program, spouses are matched with a professional in the same occupation with whom they can discuss common experiences, values, and issues. The Professional Liaison program has nothing to do with potential

employment opportunities.

Volunteering in the program provides a short-term opportunity to meet a colleague from another country. The matching gives an opportunity for a one-time meeting, which may lead to further interaction.

internationals, please get in touch with **Gloria Chaw** at [plp@stanford.edu](mailto:plp@stanford.edu)



## Cooking Classes

Cooking classes are held in the kitchen at I-Center several times a year, and is one of our most popular programs. The aim is to equip students and spouses with basic culinary skills.

If you would like to volunteer, or know someone who may be interested in getting involved, please get in touch with **Dolly Sacks** at [cooking@stanford.edu](mailto:cooking@stanford.edu)

## Spouse Fund

Spouse Fund provides small scholarships that can be used at nearby colleges and for other educational purposes. Applications are available in October at the CCIS Desk. Interviews are scheduled around mid-November.

If you would like to make a donation, or know someone who may be interested in contributing, please get in touch with **Carolyn Gannon** at [spousefund@stanford.edu](mailto:spousefund@stanford.edu)

## Potluck Music Night

Our potluck music nights are typically held thrice a year. At these Sunday evening get-togethers, people share food, fun, friendship and music. Please contact us if you would like to perform.

If you would like to volunteer, or know someone who may be interested in getting involved, please get in touch with **Annie Nunan** at [potluckmusic@stanford.edu](mailto:potluckmusic@stanford.edu)

## Friday Morning Coffee

This informal gathering is an ideal way to meet other people (especially other spouses) and learn about the many options for enriching your stay in the Stanford area. Bring a snack or fruit or juice to go with the coffee and tea provided by the I-Center.

Volunteers are always needed to help set -up and put away afterwards! Everyone (with and without children, new and returning) is equally welcome! Please get in touch with **Chula Morel-Seytoux** at [coffee@stanford.edu](mailto:coffee@stanford.edu)

## Communiqué

This is our very own news-magazine. Communiqué carries stories from our volunteers, lists upcoming programs, discusses CCIS triumphs and tribulations, and helps us know about each other.

If you want to write for us please get in touch with **Sudarshana Banerjee** at [communiqué@stanfordu.org](mailto:communiqué@stanfordu.org). We also need help in mailing Communiqué to all our members.

## Friends meditate on friends who've gone

### Gwen Weisner

Gwen was a volunteer for many, many years for our English in Action program. She was also on the CCIS Board as Chair of the English-in-Action Program. She lived in Palo Alto. Our thoughts are with her family. We miss her and mourn her loss.

(Chula Morel-Seytoux)

### Darlene Jones

We will greatly miss Darlene Jones, a long-time CCIS member, who taught English classes at the I Center for over 15 years. She delighted and inspired her many international students and EIA partners with her knowledge, humor and generosity.

(Karen Sortino)



## Social Schedule Fall/Winter 2008

BECHTEL INTERNATIONAL CENTER (I-CENTER)

### Dear CCIS Friends,

As you have discovered by now this is a page listing many of the social events we will be holding at the I-Center over the next quarter.

We would like to extend to each of you a personal invitation to come to any or all of these events that you are interested in. For more information on these events or for other events and classes which are not listed here (especially those offered by spouse volunteers) please stop by to pick up a schedule or check out the web page at:

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/icenter/families/classes.html#classes>

We would like to thank you for your work with CCIS which greatly enriches the lives of so many international students, scholars and family members at Stanford.

We hope to see you around here for these or other events in the near future.

### Everyone at the I-Center

### 2008 Rugby League World Cup

When: Oct 25 – Nov 22

The I-Center, with the Stanford Rugby Club, invites you to join us to celebrate the 13th Rugby League World Cup. This tournament brings together the 10 best teams from across the globe for a total of 18 matches and will end a year of celebrations commemorating the centenary of the game in the southern hemisphere.

### Sunday Cultural Series

When: Sundays, October and November

Please join us to explore other cultures as we present a series of cultural events and activities from different countries.

### Cultural Interactions Club Event

When: Sunday November 16

### Thanksgiving Soirée

When: Wednesday, November 26, from 7 pm

Thanksgiving is a special American holiday. The Bechtel International Center and the Riddle Family Foundation invite you to join us and other members of Stanford University's international community to celebrate this time of the year. We have music and there will be traditional Thanksgiving desserts like pumpkin pies for everybody.



Pumpkin pie for everybody

### Winter Celebrations

When: Dec 12-14

We know that not everyone leaves campus at the end of quarter. The I-Center, with support from the Riddle Family Foundation, will have a number of events over this weekend for those of us who are still around. Join us for a warm winter celebration and a great start to winter holidays.

### Friday Morning Coffee

When: Every Friday  
10 am to 12 noon

This is an ideal way to meet other people (especially other spouses) and learn about the many options during your stay in the Stanford area. Please feel free to bring your children.

Please get in touch with Chula Morel-Seytoux at [coffee@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:coffee@ccisstanfordu.org) for more information on the Friday morning coffee. She has helped bring joy and friendship to a lot of students, spouses and volunteers with her tireless hard work.

### Argentine Tango



Two to Tango  
(courtesy: Raphael Koerich, Wikimedia Commons)

When: Mondays

Nov 3 – Dec 8  
(except Nov 24)

7:00 pm

Fundamentals Class

8:15 pm

Intermediate Class

9:30 pm - Free

Argentine tango was born in the late 1800s in Buenos Aires, and has been changing and evolving ever since. It is a beautiful dance form that provides endless opportunity for improvisation and playfulness. Come and learn the basics, or develop your existing skills.

Emphasis will be on rhythm and musicality, and

partnering with lead and follow techniques.

Note: Please make sure to check the I-Center events page at [www.icenter.stanford.edu/events](http://www.icenter.stanford.edu/events) before you make plans, for the exact schedule. All the above is correct at the time of going to press, and may be subject to change.

For the most current version of our social calendar, including a complete list of the various classes we have for you, please visit [www.icenter.stanford.edu/calendar](http://www.icenter.stanford.edu/calendar)

CCIS volunteers are encouraged to sign up for the classes, and are always welcome to participate in I-Center events. Most of these are complimentary, and you do not need to pay anything. There may be a nominal fee for some of the classes. Some of the events do have limited seating, and the seats get reserved very quickly. Please make sure to pre-register as soon as possible.

Please check our bulletin boards for more information.

### Still have a question?

Ms. Naja Di Pilla is the person you are looking for. Ms Pilla is the Program Coordinator and Advising Assistant at the I-Center. You may reach her at [ndpilla@stanford.edu](mailto:ndpilla@stanford.edu).

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