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*Friends of the International Center,  
at UC San Diego*



# *Newsletter*

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Volume XL, No. 5

January 2013

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## President's Message

Happy New Year! We have had a busy fall quarter, with a lot of successful events to our credit. Many special thanks are due, just for November and December, to **Eleanor tum Suden** and **Barbara Fitzsimmons** for coordinating the pies for International Education Week's P.I.E. event; to **Jeri Abernathy** and **Eleanor tum Suden** and the many volunteers who helped with the Resale Shop's Holiday Sale; to **Carol Smith**, **Ruth Newmark**, **Louise Keeling**, **Barbara Fitzsimmons**, **Eleanor tum Suden** for serving at the International Café which we sponsored on December 7; to **Barbara Fitzsimmons**, **Alice Blake-Stalker**, and **Candace Kohl** for coordinating our Holiday Lunch, an annual event that brings members and IC staff together.

I hope everyone has been able to take a breather over the holidays and is greeting the new year with energy and enthusiasm. Maybe you want to start something new in 2013? We offer you two very important and very rewarding volunteer activities at the International Center. How about volunteering in the **Resale Shop**? This is the cornerstone of the Friends Scholarship Program, and more help is essential if we are to keep it going successfully. Another opportunity is to become a tutor in the **American English in Action** program. The huge influx of international students this fall has resulted in an unprecedented number of requests for tutors. Training is available for both programs, and the time commitments are clear. Tell me you're interested!

The *2013 Membership Directory* is coming soon. If you have any changes to your current listing in our *Directory*, please let **Renate Schmid-Schoenbein** know asap: renateschsch@yahoo.com or (858) 481-2756.

Wishing you health, happiness, and good fortune in 2013!

*Joan Adamo*  
jadamo@ucsd.edu



A Celebration of  
Chinese New Year  
Saturday, February 2,  
6:30 p.m.

A Fundraiser for Friends Scholarships

**Chinese Dinner**

with Illustrated Talk on Ethiopia  
by Prof. Christopher Wills

## **Ethnic Dinner: Ethiopia, Cradle of Humankind** —by *Chris and Liz Wills*

The Friends Ethnic Dinner on February 2 will celebrate a remarkable region that has been at the heart of human history for over four million years. Ethiopia is a mountainous landlocked country that forms the major part of the Horn of Africa. It is twice the size of France, and has more than twice the population. During a recent month-long trip, we, **Liz and Chris Wills**, visited many regions of this huge country, from the far north near the border with Sudan to the far south near the border with Kenya.

Ethiopia's history starts with small-brained ancestors of humans who lived in the Awash and Afar regions more than four million years ago. These people could walk upright, but their feet were still adapted to climbing. Lucy, perhaps our most famous ancestor, lived 3.2 million years ago and was more adapted to life on the ground. Liz and I penetrated the Afar region near the still-dangerous border with Somalia and visited the

site where Lucy was found. We also spent a day at a nearby archeological dig that is run by scientists from Arizona State University, and were amazed at the numbers of different fossil animals that seemed to ooze out of the ground everywhere in this barren region. The Afar people, highly independent nomads, wander through the area as they have for centuries.

We then headed to the north, to visit the remarkable 800-year-old churches of Lalibella that are carved out of solid rock, and the far older mysterious civilization at Axum where giant obelisks carved out of solid blocks of granite 2,200 years ago still loom over the town. Ethiopia's religious history, like its political history, is complicated. Tradition says that the country was founded by the son of a brief but passionate relationship between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. As a result, for more than a millennium, the predominant religion in northern Ethiopia was Jewish. Later, Christianity and Islam penetrated much of the country, sparking many conflicts. The remaining Jews, called Falasha, have now mostly been evacuated to Israel. Notably, the Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia is a Falasha woman. We visited a "Falasha" village that has now been taken over by local people who masquerade as faux Jews to sell trinkets to the tourists.

The second half of the trip, to the tribal regions of the south, was far more logistically challenging. Most of the more than 80 different tribes live in this region, which extends through large sections of the Rift Valley and the Omo River Valley. We were dazzled and sometimes horrified by the ancient practices that the tribes still preserve. We attended a bull-jumping ceremony in a Hamar village. In this ceremony a young man is initiated into manhood by running nimbly back and forth across the backs of a row of cattle. Meanwhile, his sisters are



whipped by men who have previously undergone the initiation, in a kind of sadomasochistic courtship ritual. And we visited one of the remotest tribes, the Mursi, where many of the girls insert lightly fired clay plates into their lower lips. The plates are gradually increased in size until they can reach the size of small dinner plates. This ritual mutilation, grounded in millennia of tradition, is now rejected by a minority of the girls. The girls who do undergo this truly disfiguring mutilation do so through a combination of pressure from tribal elders and a desire to attract tourists and their money.

On our journey we visited national parks in several parts of Ethiopia. The country still harbors a great diversity of mammals and birds, but human population pressure is sadly diminishing their numbers

and endangering many of them. National parks were established by the Emperor **Haile Selassie**, the last of a dynasty that traced itself back to that naughty liaison between Solomon and Sheba. But a decade of civil conflict that ended with the overthrow of the Emperor, followed by a decade of utter misrule by the Communist government of **Mengistu Haile Mariam**, allowed farmers, hunters and herders to invade the parks and destroy much of the wildlife. The current democratic government is trying to evict some of these people, but Ethiopia is so densely inhabited that there is nowhere to put them. Nonetheless, we managed to see some of the most remarkable species of animals that are unique to the region. Great bands of gelada baboons still inhabit the high Simien Mountains in the north. Some herds



Liz Wills with Mursi tribeswoman

of the unique Swayne's hartebeest survive in the tiny bit of savannah that remains unfarmed in the south. And on the great Sannati Plateau in the Bale National Park, a huge area that lies at an altitude almost as high as the peak of Mount Whitney, the red Ethiopian wolf still stalks its prey of rodents and

underground mole-rats.

Ethiopia is a country that is exciting, challenging and rapidly changing. The new government, which has the overwhelming support of the people, has brought even the remotest regions roads, schools, and communication with the outside world. But the government is faced with overwhelming problems. Genital mutilation of young girls is still widespread in the countryside. And the population continues to explode. We heard of one man in the south who had eight wives and 72 children, and another with fifteen wives and children so numerous, and scattered over so many villages, that nobody knew how many there were. These one-man population explosions epitomize the collision of tradition with the modern world. Will development and education overcome the damaging effects of traditions of uncontrolled reproduction and the suppression of women? The answer will lie in the friendly, intelligent, and astoundingly resilient people of Ethiopia themselves.

For several reasons we will not be featuring Ethiopian food at this dinner. First, it is even more spicy than Thai food. Secondly, it is designed to be eaten with fingers of the right hand at tables no bigger than for six persons. Third, communal sharing of food probably won't go over with our group. The food is placed on top of *injera*, a spongy crêpe-like flatbread made of teff (a type of millet) and people help themselves to the common plate—there are no individual plates.

Hence we will have another Chinese banquet cooked by the group that has been spoiling us for the past eight years. Come see what **Chef Jimmy** has come up with to celebrate the Year of the Snake! Believe it or not, there is a huge connection between China and Ethiopia. The Chinese are building major roads throughout the country and making very generous donations

to Ethiopia. The Ethiopians that we spoke to seem not to worry about the strings attached. I don't think that we are being cynical by suggesting that all the rich mineral deposits in the country might be what the Chinese are interested in, not just good will!



**Note from the Editor:** *Be sure to make your reservations early for this celebratory evening (coupon on p.11). The Chinese dinner promises to be first class, and we guarantee that Chris's talk with his spectacular photographs of Ethiopia will be illuminating.*

*By all accounts the Friends October Ethnic Dinner was a triumph. Giving credit where credit is due, President **Joan Adamo** wrote **Liz Fong Wills** (program chair), **Georgina Sham**, and **Jennie Chin**: "Lots of e-thanks have been circulating, praising the evening in wonderful words. Let me add my thanks, especially to you three, because you are the ones who made it happen. You are all amazing!"*



Chef Jimmy,  
International Center, 2011

*While we cannot handle the same overflow crowd, these three amazing buddies are committed to making the February Ethnic Dinner equally enjoyable and profitable.*

*Based on last year's Chinese Dinner (and of the delicious seven Chinese Dinners before that), we can look forward to being treated to yet another feast of fine dishes prepared by Liz's business confrères, who once more have generously offered to help Friends raise funds for international scholarships. We are greatly indebted to: **Peggy Cheong**, **Theresa Song**, **Clara Wang**, **Jimmy Chen** and his wife, **Rita Hsia**...and all the other volunteers who produce our Ethnic Dinners.*

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## Scholarship Gifts

We are pleased to report two more donations to the **Gayle Barsamian Scholarship**: these from Resale Shop volunteers **Suzuko Tokuyasu** and **Louise Keeling**. Additionally, **Ellen Warner Scott** made a donation to the Friends Scholarship Fund, as did **Nadine & Ollie Wilson**. Another contribution came from Professor Emeritus **Gabriel Jackson**, a life member of our organization and the founder of UC San Diego's Department of History. A leading authority on the Second Spanish Republic and the Spanish Civil War, Gabe moved upon his retirement to Barcelona, from where he continued to send us annual scholarship gifts. A few years ago, he returned to the States to be near his family, and currently resides in Ashland, Oregon. Gabe made his contribution in honor of **Melvin Voigt**, UCSD's University Librarian (1960-1976), credited with creating in short order a first class central library for our nascent campus. Mel Voigt's contributions to UC San Diego—along with his strong belief that a great library not only serves its immediate constituency but the entire community around it—were so valued that upon his death in 2000, one of the university's east-west routes was named "Voigt Drive."

The **Ruth Newmark Scholarship** received generous contributions from Ruth's daughter and son-in-law, **Katya Newmark** and **Matthew Costello**, as well as from Friends Treasurer **Jeri Abernathy** and her husband, **Eduard Schwan**. A big thank-you to our many thoughtful donors!

# Wednesday Coffee

—by Alice Blake-Stalker

*Question:* "What does Wednesday Coffee mean to you?"

*Chorus of answers:* "Having fun." "Learning crafts." "Cooking and eating." "Especially eating." "Feeling comfortable practicing English." "Learning about other cultures." "Making friends." "Not sitting in my apartment and feeling alone and homesick."

Wednesday Morning Coffee, like its umbrella organization, the Friends of the International Center, is a beautiful blend of tradition and change. Wednesday Coffee was started by **Mary Bailey**, who regularly hosted a group of international women in her own home. When the International Center was built, the Coffees moved there. After Mary Bailey, the program was coordinated first by **Mary Merdinger**

and then by **Yvonne Percival**, followed for two decades by **Emily Stowell**. The current coordinator, **Georgina Sham**, who (along with **Renate Berthold** and **Alma Coles**) revitalized the program, modestly claims, "The group runs itself; I just get input and make the schedule of activities."

Wednesday Coffee, like all Friends activities, has numerous volunteers. One longtime, valued volunteer is **Madeleine Rast**. She was recruited in the 1980's by Emily Stowell at a chance encounter in a grocery store. Madeleine echoes others: "It is a close group of volunteers, and I enjoy getting to know participants from all over the world." Madeleine instinctively appears where she is needed, often at the conversation table.

Wednesday Coffee has grown and changed over the years. One spinoff, described in a separate article in this issue, is Gus' Table. A further spinoff is Mommy, Daddy & Me, a class for toddlers and parents, also held Wednesday mornings. Expanded in March 2009 from a somewhat chaotic playgroup into a structured activity, the class has been the creation of **Keiko Bott-Suzuki**, who sadly resigned as both coordinator and teacher. Starting in January, the new coordinators will be **Coco Li** and **Fiona Chen**.

Another Wednesday Coffee spinoff is the Tuesday Knit-Along group, run by **Jennie Chin**, **Judy Bavasi**, and **Mary Woo**. Some of the regular Wednesday Coffee participants, including some who had never knitted before, wanted to learn more and share their projects while practicing English.

Wednesday Morning Coffee meets Wednesdays, 10:00-noon. All are welcome to join the fun.



## ArtPower! Supper

—by Barbara Fitzsimmons

Our October ArtPower! Community Supper was a smashing success. The food selection and execution were wonderful, with special Congolese-inspired dishes that delighted everyone. Chef **Martin Lahtov** has shown us what wonders can emerge from his kitchen. We will soon have our second and final community supper of the 2012-13 academic year, and you can be sure that the meal, preceding the performance of *Compagnie Marie Chouinard* from Canada, will be superb.

- **French Canadian Supper**, jointly sponsored by the International Center, Friends, and ArtPower!, **Thursday, January 17, 2013, 6:00 p.m., at the International Center**. Cost: \$12 per person, \$7 for UCSD students. Our chef will be preparing Creole-Style Shrimp, Waldorf Salad, Coq au Vin with Fingerling Rosemary Potatoes, ending the meal with Crêpes Suzette. Bring your friends and join us for an authentic and delicious meal.

Order early as the deadline for supper ticket sales is Monday, January 14. Vegetarian meals are available upon request, and requests should be made at time of purchase. If you have supper questions, please contact **Barbara Fitzsimmons** (bfitzsimmons@ucsd.edu).

- **Dance Performance by Compagnie Marie Chouinard, 8:00 p.m. at Mandeville Auditorium**. Presented by ArtPower! Cost: \$24-\$46. Identify yourself as a Friends member at the Box Office, or use the code PARTD in the coupon field when ordering on line ([www.artpower.ucsd.edu](http://www.artpower.ucsd.edu)) and receive a 15% discount for the performance.

### January Calendar

Jan. 2, 16: **Family Orientation**, 9:15

Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: **Wednesday Morning Coffee**, 10:00-Noon

Jan. 7: **Resale Shop** reopens

Jan. 11, 18, 25: **International Café**, Noon-1:15

Jan. 8: **Board Meeting**, 9:30

Jan. 8, 15, 22, 28: **Knit Along**, 1:00-3:30

Jan. 10: **International Cooking Experience**, 9:30-1:00

Jan. 16: **Int'l Kitchen**, Noon

Jan. 17: **ArtPower! Community Supper**, 6:00

Jan. 21: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

## Gus' Table: 42 Years

### Table Talk

—by *Nori Faer*

"How far back can you trace your ancestors?" I ask the group of eight on this Wednesday morning at the Conversation Table. "I can trace my people back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. And one guy was a really bad guy who stole from people all the time!" This from **Kristoff**, the spouse of a postdoc here from Germany. I am speechless. "How is this possible?" I ask him. What I come to learn from his response is that church records in Germany were always "religiously" kept and were quite detailed. "Tell us something about how marriages are celebrated in South Korea," I request of a rather shy newcomer to the group who is here as a visiting scholar. "How do you handle funerals?" I ask as an open question to the group hoping to involve the more reluctant members. "Birthdays?" "Rites of passage into adulthood?" Here I talk a little bit about Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and Quinceañeras.

These are just a few of the topics we discuss at what has come to be known as, "Gus' Table," named

for **Gus Lestick** who recently retired after heading the English conversation table for more years than he cares to remember. However, in an interview with **Alice Blake-Stalker**, published in the Friends April 2012 *Newsletter*, Gus divulged that he had started tutoring UCSD international students around 1970, first at his own home and later, upon his retirement, at the International Center, including at Wednesday Morning Coffee. He is quoted as saying, "I have now tutored 259 students."

Gus seemed to know everything about everything, but between **Letty Ponomareff** and myself, we manage to bring factual information to light about our American culture, history, politics, and holidays. We often use questions from the New York Times "The Ethicist" column, which is a surefire way to create interesting debates.

**Olga**, who hails from St. Petersburg, Russia, brings in her wedding album and we all ooh and aah



Gus Lestick shown with several of his international tutees, 2008

over the images of her in her wedding dress with Handsome Husband at her side. I share pictures of my trip to Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia and regale them with tales of riding an elephant and eating ant larva pancakes. This leads to the group happily offering information about the more bizarre and interesting dishes and ingredients in their local foods: in Mexico they eat fried caterpillars, South Korea has several recipes using dog meat, and Iran prides itself on a commonly-eaten dish featuring sheep head and feet. We are all nonjudgmental about these foods and a few of us request recipes!

Letty leads the group in identifying musical instruments, and we learn that one of our newest members is an accomplished violinist from China. At our request she is willing to give us a small concert one Wednesday morning.

**Lee** brings in her newborn baby that we are all so eager to meet, after watching her pregnancy progress for nine months. Hello **Theodore!**

This is such a small part of what goes on every Wednesday morning from 10 to 12 at Gus' Table. There are lots of laughs, "Most Embarrassing Moments," and a great deal of good feelings among the group. Come and join the discussion!



Friends conversation leaders Letty Ponomareff (standing second from left), Nori Faer (standing third from right) and Kristine Kneib (seated second from right) surrounded by ardent conversationalists



## Friends Resale Shop

—by *Jeri Abernathy*

### Holiday Sale

On November 12, 2012, we held a sorting party for the Resale Shop Holiday Sale. **Marjorie Jackson, Eve Davidson, Nancy Homeyer, Jaeho Park** (a student fulfilling his hours of community service, who sadly has now left our volunteer environment), **Eduard Schwan**, and **Jeri Abernathy** gathered in the International Center lounge to sort through ten large storage boxes full of holiday treasures. We sorted Christmas lights and ornaments, dishes and serving trays, beautiful new things, and fun gift items. We also separated holiday jewelry, clothing, and home decor.

The surprised shopper of the day was Nancy Homeyer, who found a brand new designer vest and a Pashmina shawl for herself, and some gilded pine cones for the house. Marjorie Jackson was the runner-up, finding a lovely picnic set for a gift. Both got a head start on Black Friday shopping. Helpers get first dibs on the merchandise. Keep this in mind, when we call for volunteers!

We worked hard for about three hours sorting, tagging, packing, and hauling. I am truly grateful to my husband, Eduard, for being the muscle to haul the boxes up and down the ramp. We had a very large amount of stuff! Everything was then nicely packed away until the actual sale.

Friday, December 7 was a busy day. The Holiday Sale was on.

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## Resale Shop Profile

—by *Joe Nichols*



Tzu-mei Yip in Barcelona

**Tzu-mei Yip**, a native of Taiwan and 50-year resident of the United States, says that she thinks that she's been a Resale Shop volunteer for at least twenty years. "It all started with working in the Kitchen Exchange, suggested and encouraged by **Georgina Sham**. Because I was allergic to dust, I was transferred to the Resale Shop, then under **Joyce Dunn**. I have been working there ever since."

You can generally find Tzu-mei at the Shop on Wednesday afternoons, usually in the company of **Fran Doolittle**, with whom she has been paired for some years. More than anything, Tzu-mei loves meeting the students—be they American or foreign. Giving her time and good cheer to the Friends Resale Shop is her way of serving our community.

A lover of art, Tzu-mei has a degree from San Diego State University in art history. Her husband, **Wai-lim Yip**, an acclaimed poet, translator, and critic who recently retired, was a 40-year veteran of UCSD's Literature Department. The Yips have two children, both married, living in the Los Angeles area. They are very proud of their grandson, who was recently admitted to Harvard University.

Tzu-mei was a lot of fun to talk with. What a vivacious person whose devotion to family and the Friends is unrivaled!

**Eve Davidson, Fran Doolittle, Josie Foulks, Louise Keeling, Dottie Keffala, and Mayra Lopez** all came to help. **Eduard Schwan** came early to bring the boxes out of the upstairs closet. We set up tables outside: six for our things and one for the Wednesday Morning Craft Guild, cheerfully manned by **Keiko Hirai** and **Dagmar Bocakova**. Additionally, we had some things in the Oceanids Pavilion and, of course, in the Shop itself.

**Eleanor tum Suden** helped before heading off to serve at the Café. **Irene Allison** and **Suzuko Tokuyasu** dropped in to help. **Cynthia Leal** stayed for two hours during the lunch period. It is amazing how much work there is, and how many people it takes to get everything out and help all the customers. **Carol Smith** showed up and watched over things while I ran to get change. Every moment of help was appreciated and needed.

After all the hustle and bustle, some of the leftover items were moved into the Resale Shop and some were taken to the Salvation Army. But for the most part, we were well shopped and the customers were happy with their finds.

Our hard work pays off. Notwithstanding the Shop's low prices, we manage to raise substantial funds for Friends programs, most significantly for international scholarships.

### Shop Reopens After Closing for the Holidays

The Resale Shop will reopen for business on Monday, January 7.

### Volunteers Wanted!

A number of Shop volunteers have moved on or retired. To achieve optimal success, we need more help. If you would like to learn more about the different volunteer opportunities, please contact **Jeri Abernathy** at [jalaw9@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jalaw9@sbcglobal.net) or you may call her at (760) 632-9895.

## Undergraduate Winter Scholarships

The Scholarship Committee met in November to read scholarship applications of undergraduates going abroad in winter or spring. Because there are few applicants at this time of the year, this session allows for more detailed discussion of policies and procedures than the April session, when the Committee feels besieged by the well over hundred undergraduate applications alone.

While there were just five applications before us, they were all of high caliber—some exceptionally so. Not surprisingly, these students of quite differing backgrounds are planning to study abroad for quite different reasons. Four of the five intend to participate in Education Abroad Programs sponsored by the University of California, but located in such far-flung places as Costa Rica, France, Japan, and Korea with widely differing curricula.

From the five candidates, the Scholarship Committee selected two students to receive Friends Scholarships.

◆**David Dannecker.** In the spring, David will participate in the

EAP Costa Rica Tropical Ecology program, a perfect match for his major (Ecology/Behavior/Evolution), as well as excellent preparation for a future career in wild life conservation research. “Rainforests capture my imagination, and having briefly visited both Olympic National Forest and the Peruvian Amazon, I really look forward to more fully exploring and having the opportunity to conduct research in the rain forests of Costa Rica.”

◆**Michael Tang.** Early exposure to Pokémon and other Japanese video games, steered Michael to a deeper interest in Japan and the study of its language. It is therefore understandable that Michael has chosen to spend a quarter studying at Osaka University, at its Frontier Lab which allows up-and-coming student researchers to participate in ongoing university research, and is a great place for a student pursuing a degree in nanoengineering.

Aware of the small number of applications, many members of the Scholarship Committee decided to tend to other matters (two were seen

working in the Resale Shop!). It was left to 7 out of the 23 Committee members to make the selection. They were: **Joan Adamo, Barbara Fitzsimmons, Jean Fort, Nancy Homeyer, Marjorie Jackson, Ruth Newmark, and Josephine Randel** (a welcome new addition to the team). Greatly missed was **Kim Burton**, UCSD Director of the systemwide Education Abroad Program, who, despite having to address family health issues, provided much helpful information and thanked us “for reading and making these often tough decisions.”

Among her last remaining acts as UC San Diego’s Dean of International Education, **Lynn Anderson** wrote: “Thank you so much for the funds you raise for scholarships and your thoughtful consideration of the applicants. As you know, access to excellence is key at a public research university and you help our students achieve that. I am deeply appreciative.”

We will greatly miss Lynn’s wise counsel and friendship, and look forward to working with the newly-appointed Dean of the International Center, **Dr. Kirk Simmons.**

## Pizza Party

Our new Dean of the International Center, **Dr. Kirk Simmons**, arrived on campus on November 13. Only a few days later, **Lynn Anderson**, the outgoing Dean of International Education, invited the Friends Board of Directors to meet him over a slice of pizza. The informality of the lunch allowed for personal exchanges, and concluded with some picture taking.

Commented Kirk: “I deeply appreciate the warm welcome extended to me this week. I very much look forward to working closely with you and all of the Friends members.”



Seated: Ruth Newmark, Mary Woo, Alice Blake-Stalker, Betty Burton  
Standing: Kirk Simmons, Lynn Anderson, Barbara Fitzsimmons, Joan Adamo, Carol Smith, Candace Kohl, Jennie Chin

Missing from the photo: Nancy Homeyer and Eleanor tum Suden, who had left, as well as Josie Foulks and Renate Schmid-Schoenbein, who popped in briefly after completing their shift at the Resale Shop.

# Who Says Friends Are Not Appreciated?

—by Ruth Newmark

At our fall Ethnic Dinner—a fundraiser for Friends Scholarships—we invited **Mindi Summers**, one of our 2012 scholarship recipients, to speak. In May, Mindi had written: “Thank you so very much for the honor of being awarded a Friends Scholarship. I am very excited to share my research with undergraduate and graduate students in Papua, Indonesia. Would you like for me to prepare a presentation on my research or a separate meeting?”

Mindi is a doctoral student at Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO); she is a NSF Graduate Research Fellow and is affiliated with the Marine Invertebrate Phylogenetics Lab. With the Friends Scholarship, she said, she planned to participate in an international field trip destined to the Raja Ampat Islands, located in Indonesia’s province of West Papua. The project’s aim is no less than to assemble the echinoderm tree of life.

I jumped at the offer of an SIO tour, and asked **Eleanor tum Suden**, who for years had worked in the SIO Director’s Office, to accompany me. Curiously, my daughter **Katya** and a friend, taking a constitutional walk on the beach, spotted my car, and were able to accompany us on a private tour of Mindi’s lab and other research stations in Hubbs Hall. Observing baby leopard sharks swimming in a tank, we learned about some of our local marine life, but also learned about the more exotic marine invertebrates—the featherstar crinoids that look more like plants than animals—that Mindi is studying. Known at SIO for her devotion to public outreach, Mindi, in typical fashion, wrote: “Thank you so much for coming yesterday; it is wonderful to share what I do with people so interested and engaged.”

True to form, at our October Sri Lankan Dinner, Mindi spoke enthusiastically about her research, saying: “Thank you so much for the honor.”

At our Just for Fun Party in early October, two other scholarship recipients spoke to us. **Miranda Conway** (2010) talked about her year’s study in Spain. She had specifically sought out the University of Granada because of its excellent translation program, an aspect of linguistics not addressed on our campus. Upon her return from her EAP study, Miranda began to work part-time at the International Center. Once she had completed her bachelor’s degree in linguistics, she was ready to accept a fulltime position, and is now working happily in the International Students & Programs Office, as Office Manager.

**Milan Dang-Vu** (2012) amazed us with her stories of working during the summer on the U.S. Navy



Eleanor tum Suden, Ruth Newmark, and Mindi Summers

Ship Mercy, while this hospital ship was stationed in Vietnam as part of a larger humanitarian mission in the Pacific. As a 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student, Milan was qualified to help in the operating room, but because of her fluency in Vietnamese, her skills as a translator were often needed more than her medical skills. Even so, Milan did get to help repair cleft lips and palates, exactly the kind of surgical work that had attracted her to the program in the first place.

All three students emphasized the importance of the Friends Scholarship, thanked the Friends, and graciously wrote that they enjoyed meeting some of our members who make these international experiences possible. Mindi, Miranda, and Milan are only three of the many Friends Scholarship recipients who express such sentiments. Many other students convey their gratitude. Here follow two more:

**Roxana Wiswell**, Eleanor Roosevelt College, Global Seminar on Public Health, Amman, Jordan: “I just got around to reading the *Newsletter* and can honestly say that I cried reading the kind things Dr. **Al-Delaimy** had to say. Thank you so much for sharing this with me, for including my letter, and once again, for all the amazing things that you do for the International Center.”

**Gerrit Davis**, Thurgood Marshall College, OAP, Buenos Aires, Argentina: “It would be my honor to accept the Friends Scholarship. Thank you so much for helping to make this experience possible; I cannot express my appreciation enough!”

Roxana described her experience in the December *Newsletter*; Gerrit’s report appears on pp.9-10 of this issue. At the Friends Holiday Lunch we heard from **Sam Dunscombe**, **Kaylie Fernald**, and **Maya Oren**.

At the upcoming Ethnic Dinner on February 2, we will have a chance to meet several more of our remarkable scholarship recipients.

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# SCHOLARSHIP LETTERS

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Dear Ruth and Friends of the International Center,

To study abroad is to become versatile. To study abroad is to grow. To study abroad is to be stretched beyond what is comfortable. To study abroad is to have your intellect, worldview, and beliefs challenged and refined. Starting from day one, my experience has taught me these lessons, as well as those of adaptation and creativity. My connecting flight from Newark, New Jersey to Buenos Aires was cancelled and rescheduled for 48 hours later, so after losing my baggage, sleeping in the airport, and getting to know a little bit of Newark, I arrived at my bustling home of Buenos Aires.

With the start of my trip being as such, I felt ready to handle most anything, but quickly realized that a substantial amount of time had passed since I last used my Spanish, and set myself to learning the language well enough to sufficiently navigate my new surroundings. Luckily, my program began with an intensive language month, and both of my host parents were extremely patient as I dusted off my Spanish in the first few weeks. I soon adopted my host mom as my second mother and she will be the person I miss most upon my departure. The novelty of sitting at the dinner table speaking Spanish still has not worn off, and as I gain further command over the language, I dream of the future opportunities I will have with that ability, and celebrate it every day.

What I was most looking forward to upon arriving in Buenos Aires was to join a volunteer organization as well as find a church where I could get to know locals, practice my Spanish, pursue my faith, and hopefully give back to the country that has so generously received me. What I found very quickly after attending multiple information meetings was that volunteer organizations here in the city were

either 1) very unorganized, or 2) do not want foreigners who are in the country only for a temporary period of time. Unable to find either a volunteer organization or a home church was just as much a blessing as it was a frustration. Although those attempts were thwarted, I had much more time to spend practicing Spanish with my host family, traveling by bus to see the diverse and beautiful country, and to study diligently.

Luckily, International Studies Abroad, the program provider with whom I am here, has recently offered me multiple opportunities to work on rehabilitation projects and clean an unconventional education center called "Camino Abiertos." We have painted computation classrooms and cleaned the patio and are returning soon to finish the paint jobs. Camino is a program meant for working adults, working teenagers over the age of 14, or teenagers who have been expelled from school and did not finish their education. It allows them flexible schedules to continue their education. Getting to know the people there is a blessing; they're fascinated by students from the United States, ask why we are in Argentina and if there is inequality and violence in the States. Being able to share with them, as well as learn about their stories, is just as meaningful as being able to serve them with our work.

My classes are incredibly interesting and I enjoy the readings. United States-Latin American Relations, Argentina: an Open Society, Latin American Cultures and Civilizations, and Tango are the classes I have elected, and all but Tango have stretched my view of politics as well as international affairs.

It is truly surprising that in spite of the United States' controversial

role in the Argentine military dictatorships and the Dirty War that claimed 30,000 lives, Argentines still receive me with open arms. After living and studying here I feel as if I am a citizen of the world, and not just the United States.

I have caught the travel bug (and learned how to do it for really cheap). It is during my travels that I learn the most. There have been so many highlights throughout my stay in Argentina that I must limit my account. Most impressive were the powerful and expansive waterfalls of Iguazú. The falls pour over a million gallons of roaring water every second only to crash loudly on massive rocks, many times accompanied by lush rainbows that are a product of the strong sunlight and massive clouds of mist exuded from them.

Visiting an indigenous village of the Guaraní was also a significant experience after I had studied the clash they are facing with "Development" in Professor **Nancy Postero's** International Studies 101 class at UCSD.

Another was standing atop Cerro Catedral in San Carlos de Bariloche,



Gerrit Davis on the right



looking over the mountain ranges that surround Lake Nahuel Huapi in the Lakes Region of Northern Patagonia.

I could go on about the sunsets over Mina Clavero, the wineries and mountain ranges of Mendoza, the beautiful colonial city of Colonia de Sacramento Uruguay, and the overwhelming sights and adventures to be experienced inside the city of

Buenos Aires itself, but they are all parts of an incredible country that must be experienced to be believed.

Thanks to your support, I have been able to enjoy and experience what it means to study abroad and learn a new language. Thank you again. I cannot express my gratitude enough.

*Gerrit Davis*, International Studies/Sociology Major, TMC

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Friends of the International Center: My experience in Italy was truly a life-changing adventure. For the first time in my academic career I was able to pursue an educational opportunity based on interest and passion, while being able to supplement my overall education at UCSD. The two Global Seminar classes were most interesting and really made my abroad experience complete. For it is one thing to go visit these incredible historical sites, but to be taught by a distinguished academic scholar about the sites and then visit them is very different and incredible.

The humanities course was a great way to understand the context of Italy in the Renaissance period, but the Renaissance City Rome course was way more engaging, because we were able to read in great detail about every site we visited and really understand the deep importance of each place,

For instance, every day I walked next to the Aurelian Wall, and with each passing I paused to recall the great history of the wall, dating back to the Roman Empire. In addition to such everyday experiences, the site tours were truly awe inspiring. The complementing course material helped me to really understand the significance of every church, museum, and monument we visited.

The best academic experience was visiting Florence and being able to study some of the greatest pieces of world art. This intense three-day journey allowed me to absorb more city art knowledge than I could imagine, and really evoked a new desire for art in my life. My favorite piece was the Florence Pietà by Michelangelo, where Michelangelo displayed his self-portrait on the face of Nicodemus. I actually chose this sculpture for my final paper in one of my courses.

Following the expert advice of my professor to expand my knowledge of Northern Italy, I spent a weekend in Venice. I also visited the Amalfi Coast and became familiar with Southern Italy, which allowed me to compare and contrast the two very different regions.

North and South were both great experiences, but there is truly no place like Rome. It is a wonderful old city to explore, and I really enjoyed every minute I was there, and each learning moment and experience I encountered on this great study-abroad adventure.

I would like to say thanks again to the Friends Scholarship Committee and all the generous donors for their contribution to my academic experience at UCSD.

*Scott Natsuhara*  
Political Science Major, ERC

Dear Friends of the International Center,

Studying abroad in Cadiz, Spain has been one of the greatest highlights of my undergraduate career. I had read about the beautiful cultural traditions and the many sights that exist throughout Europe. Yet, I never thought I would be able to experience and see the many wonders of Europe. I am grateful for the opportunity your scholarship provided.



Cadiz

What I enjoyed most about the Global Seminar was its location. Living in the old part of Cadiz was filled with many adventures. The scenery of Cadiz—from the architecture of the buildings to the accessibility to the beach—made it a magical place. The inhabitants themselves were full of life and received us with open arms. It was amazing that some people from the local stores and restaurants, or those that lived nearby, knew our names. It made me feel that I was living in a place that I could consider home.

Studying Flamenco and being able to experience firsthand various performances by local artists was extraordinary. The Flamenco culture within Cadiz can be felt throughout the city. Being able to study an art form at the same time as experiencing it through performances was phenomenal.

After studying abroad I seek to demonstrate to other students the great opportunity that being abroad has to offer. Global Seminars give you the opportunity to experience a different lifestyle and at the same time allow you to grow as a person.

With much appreciation,  
*Ligia Hernandez*  
Sociology/Political Science Major, Muir



# RESERVATIONS FOR CHINESE DINNER

## Saturday, February 2, 2013, 6:30 PM

Please complete this form and enclose a check, made payable to the Friends of the International Center. Send to Ethnic Dinner Chair, Friends of the International Center, UCSD International Center 0018, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093-0018.

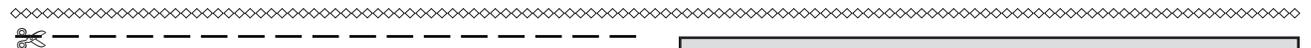
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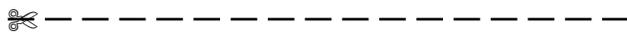
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