



January/February 2021

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

Happy 2021!

It's 2021, and I certainly feel a renewed sense of hope... a new year, a new administration, more vaccines becoming available every day... what a relief!

Closer to home, I am happy to report that almost every one of our board members will continue to serve in their positions for the 2021-2022 school year. This says a lot about how well we work together as a group. Even though we are sad to have to say goodbye to two valuable board members who are retiring in June, **Susan Hartenbaum** and **Carole Hessler**, we are so lucky that their positions will be filled by current board members. **Raj Khanna** will also be stepping down as Treasurer in June after serving so ably for the last seven years. He has been a trusted advisor to me and has made it easy for all of us on the board to understand our budget and what we can and cannot do financially. Unfortunately, we haven't yet been able to fill his important position.

If any CCIS member has an accounting or bookkeeping background and would be interested in serving on the CCIS Board of Directors as Treasurer or knows someone I should approach, please contact me so I can share the job description and we can talk.

If anyone is interested in serving on the board in another capacity, please contact me so I can keep you in mind as positions arise.

I can't wait for us to be able to offer our programs in person and for all of us to be able to see each other again.

Fondly,
Annette Isaacson
CCIS President
president@ccisstanfordu.org

Two Dedicated Volunteers Adapt to COVID



Written by Tom and Steffi Buch

We have taught **ESL** classes in the CCIS International Students program at the Bechtel International Center for many years. Steffi has taught a weekly class in *Communicating Across Cultures*, while Tom has taught a weekly class about *Humor and Culture in America*.

As we know, in-person classes were shut down in mid-March of 2020. Tom looked into holding our classes on Zoom. We started teaching remotely in April 2020 and were pleasantly surprised that several international students joined the class. One of the other teachers has also decided to teach remotely. Despite technical problems at the beginning, we worked through them and now are in full swing. Currently, Tom and Steffi co-teach a class on *Topical and Historic Issues in America*. Steffi leads a class on *Continuing to Speak English*.

Our background is human resources for Steffi and pediatric dentistry for Tom. We had both retired by 2000 and are in our 70s. We have found our new "calling." We are so thrilled when students tell us how much they appreciate the classes and how they have learned from them. We encouraged some of our students to give a presentation on their own. It was (and is) a wonderful experience for them.

Working with internationals has brought us great joy, a sense of purpose, and fulfillment. Currently, we interface with some small groups during the week and on the weekend. For example, we meet with a group on Saturdays which includes three Chinese students who are still here and two who have now returned to China. We meet at 4:30 pm (7:30 am in China) and continue to discuss both fun and serious topics.

Tom created a web site (<http://www.tomsteffi.com/>) and dedicated a section for "English Classes" where we post our most recent class information with links for students to review. We have posted additional information including American recipes, recommended films, restaurants and books. Our travel suggestions and pictures are also available.

We consider ourselves lucky to be teaching ESL at Bechtel. Thanks go to MaryAnn Saunders for accepting us into the CCIS ESL program and answering our questions about ESL throughout the years.

We are so grateful to have the opportunity to interact with so many stimulating students. We always tell them that we are learning much about their cultures while helping them with their English skills.

Meet the new CCIS Board member

The Board is pleased to announce a new member. This is a newly created position, **Publicity Chair**, one that the Board felt is necessary to be able to reach more people and increase awareness of CCIS and its valuable programs.

We are so thankful for having a wonderful new member and look forward to having her input and suggestions.

LYDIA MORET - Publicity Chair

Lydia moved from her home country of Belgium to the Bay Area one year ago. Currently she lives in Fremont with her husband and her cat Bella. When Lydia lived in Belgium, she worked for several years as a radio journalist in Brussels. Since the beginning of this year she has been working as an editor for a Belgian media company. As a volunteer she spends time on CCIS's social media outreach. Lydia also hosts the biweekly Podcast Club at the Bechtel International Center. She looks forward to publicizing CCIS programs to Stanford internationalizing and the Stanford community.



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

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