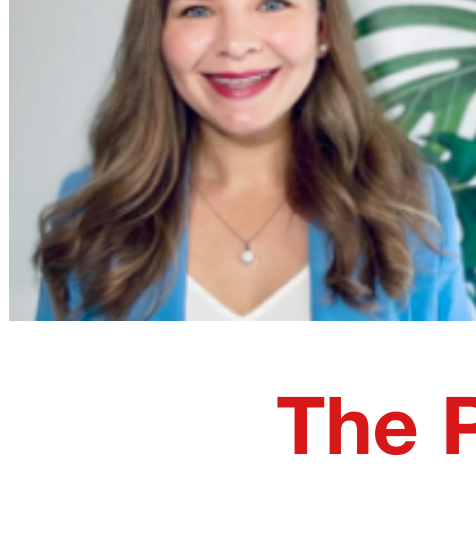




CCIS Volunteers continue to serve international graduate students, visiting scholars and their families at Stanford University. Read about some of our programs and events!



"Notes at the Top"

Kate Khatseyeva
CCIS President

The Power of Community

In November my husband and I were invited to our first traditional Thanksgiving dinner. We have been living in the U.S. for four years but never celebrated the holiday. We come from a different culture and only saw Thanksgiving celebrations in the movies.

So just imagine our excitement when we got an invitation to dinner featuring a real turkey with stuffing and gravy! We shared a meal with people from different countries having different traditions. Our gracious host is a member of our CCIS community. It was one of those times when I was so thankful for being a part of this amazing community. The power of community is undeniable!

After Thanksgiving Covid happened and some of the Board members, including me, missed the CCIS Holiday Luncheon. But thanks to the power of the community, it was well organized and hosted as planned. I want to express my deep gratitude to all our community members who made it happen. It was another example of a powerful and supportive community.

In December, when Bechtel approved our plan for the CCIS office renovation our community members helped with the disposal of old furniture, packing everything in boxes and moving to the temporary office. Together we can do so much!

The purpose of this message is to show how strong and powerful we are together and how much impact we can bring when we will unite our efforts. We need to be a supportive community to ourselves first and set an example for our internationals. We can invest our time and effort in building strong relationships, helping others to grow, and inspiring others to go beyond their limitations.

I wish you a Happy Holiday season with a lot of positive people around you and deep meaningful connections.

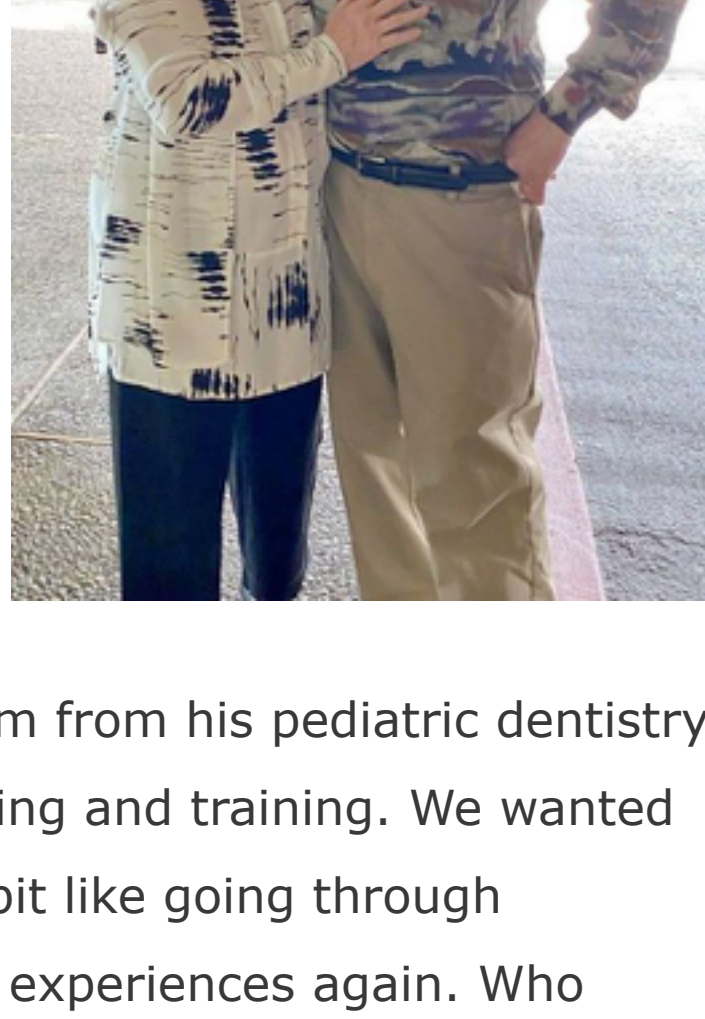
Sincerely,
Kate Khatseyeva
President of CCIS at Stanford

Thanks for being a part of CCIS and supporting our International Community at Stanford.

president@ccisstanfordu.org

Enriching Lives - Both ours and our International Students -

A Testimony About Participation from Steffi & Tom Buch



We retired in our early fifties, Tom from his pediatric dentistry practice and Steffi from HR/staffing and training. We wanted to repurpose our lives. It was a bit like going through adolescence and the empty nest experiences again. Who were we going to be for the rest of our lives?

Much to our surprise, in spite of our professional and academic training and our travels, it wasn't easy to find a volunteer position! The first few years we taught seniors at Little House how to use email and word. Then Steffi had the good fortune to meet Darlene Jones (may she rest in peace) who taught ESL in the CCIS program. Steffi had always had an interest in teaching ESL. Darlene introduced Steffi to Marianne Saunders, the head of the CCIS ESL program, who welcomed her into the program, trained, and mentored her. These two women changed my (Steffi's) life in the best of all possible ways.

After a few years of teaching Marianne asked Steffi to teach a class on humor. Steffi suggested that Tom teach the class since he easily related to humor and loved to teach. We co-taught this class together for several years.

Steffi focuses on helping ESL students become comfortable making mistakes when speaking a new language and understanding the differences and similarities in our cultures. Learning how to function in a foreign country and new communication skills is also a focus.

Tom switched from teaching about American humor to presenting Issues in American Culture. Through the use of PowerPoint presentations utilizing short videos and slides, he presents major issues confronting Americans such as immigration, abortion, women's rights, voting, government, arts, LGBTQ issues, homelessness, medical care, and many others. He sends out a vocabulary list ahead of each class and posts the presentation on our website for students to review after class. Tom encourages student participation and sharing how these issues are dealt with in their own culture/country.

Through the years (about 20 for Steffi and about 15 for Tom), our courses have evolved. We continue to learn a lot from our students and endeavor to focus on their needs while they are living in the US. Sometimes we think we learn more from our students than they learn from us!

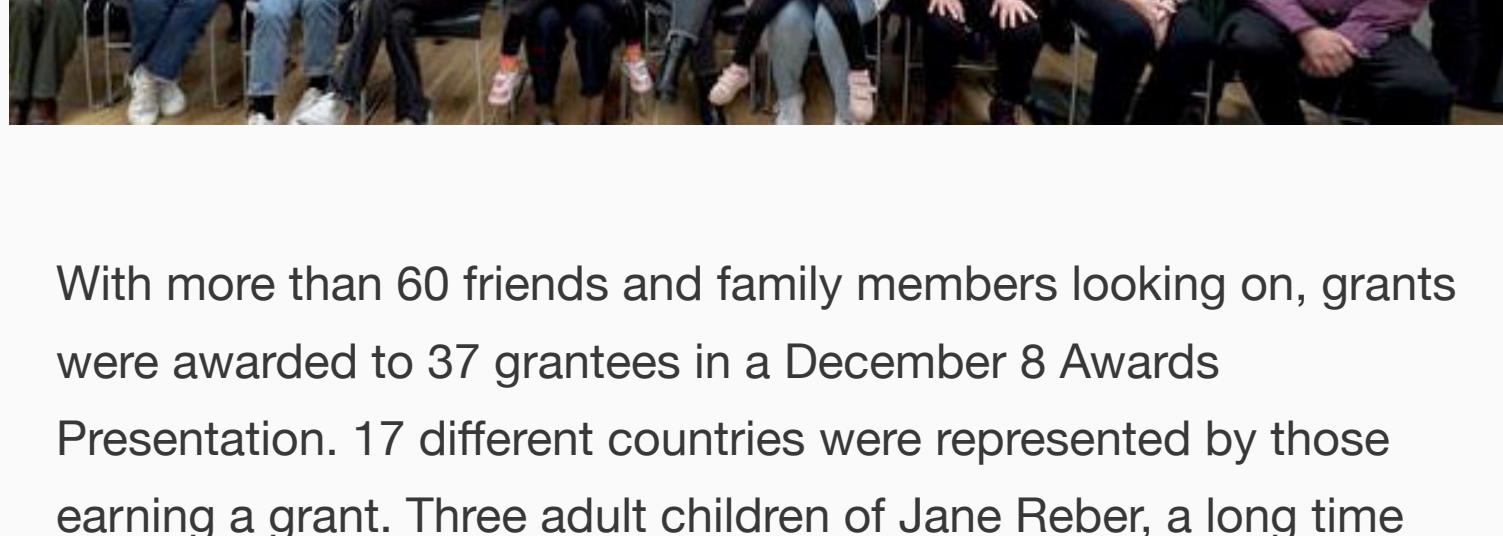
Teaching classes on Zoom since the campus closed down due to COVID has been both challenging, rewarding, and stimulating. Together, we and our students have learned to use Zoom and to relate online. We have been able to develop deeper more relevant conversations. Our classes have developed into small supportive open communities while always welcoming new students. Having this outreach has been so enriching for us and, as it happens, kept us from feeling too isolated during the pandemic.

We have developed close personal relationships with many of our students over the years. We meet weekly with some former students from China who continue to practice their English with us. Also, Steffi has a student who returned to Sardinia, Italy, with whom she meets weekly.

Teaching ESL, in person and on Zoom, has enriched us immensely. It has brought purpose, new friends, intellectual stimulation and satisfaction to both of us. The experience has given us more than we could have imagined.

Spouse Education Fund

Issues New Grants



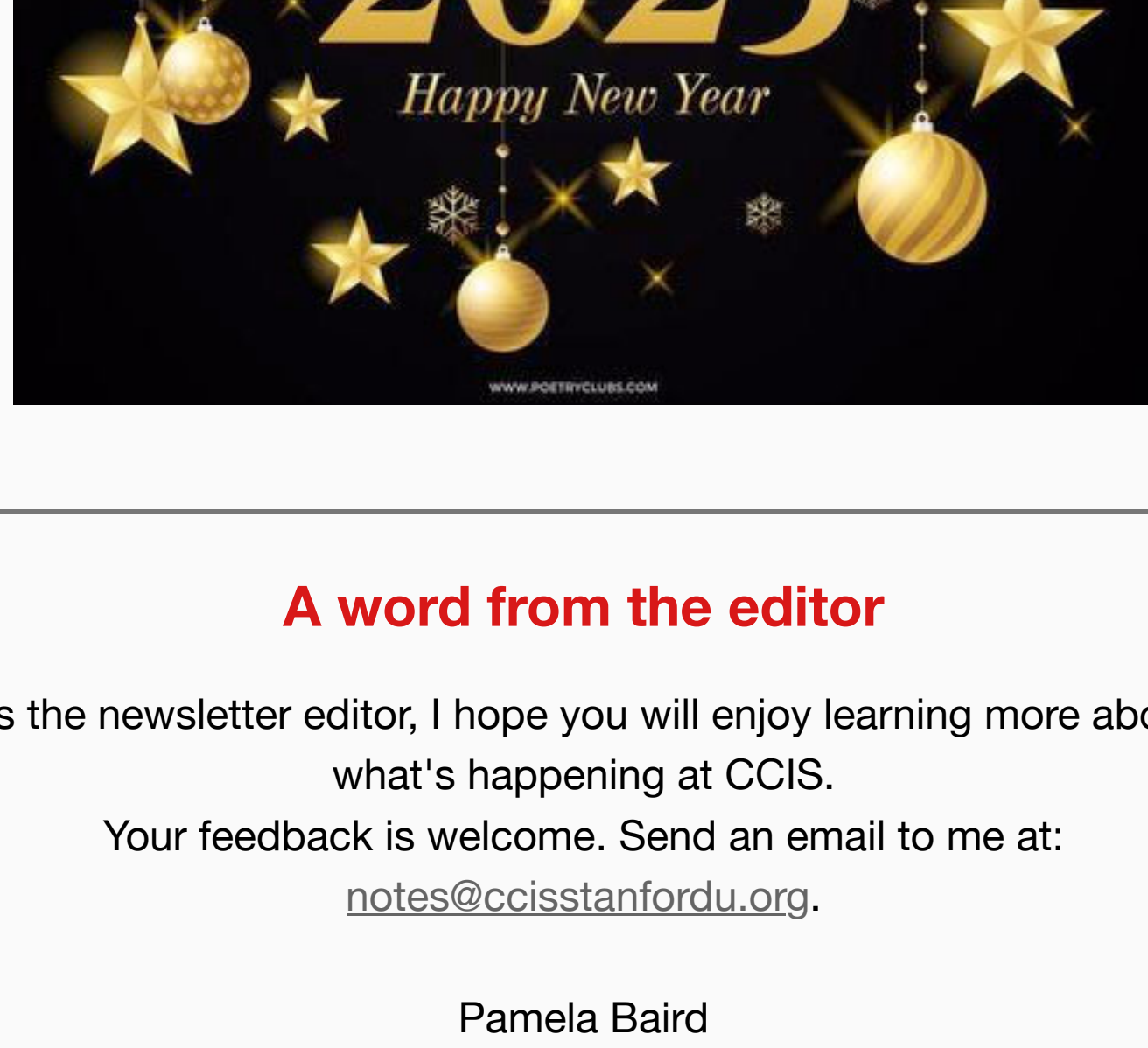
With more than 60 friends and family members looking on, grants were awarded to 37 grantees in a December 8 Awards Presentation. 17 different countries were represented by those earning a grant. Three adult children of Jane Reber, a long time active member of CCIS, presented a memorial grant they created in their mother's memory. The Jane Reber Memorial Grant has supported multiple grants over the past several years.

Many Stanford international spouses put their careers on hold while their spouse pursues academic studies at Stanford. The Spouse Education Fund program offers a grant (usually sufficient to take one course) so that the spouse can partake in academic enrichment.

The grants are intended to provide spouses with encouragement and financial support to take a class or to pursue a personal or professional interest. Education grants, up to \$500 per grant, are awarded annually to international spouses.

The SEF program was established almost forty years ago and has provided nearly \$200,000 in educational grants to almost 600 international spouses.

The SEF is the only CCIS program that invites specific funding from the community. Each summer the SEF program solicits donations from CCIS members and the community. These funds are distributed as grants late in the Fall Term to international spouses who have applied to and been interviewed by the Spouse Education Fund Committee.



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 me at:
notes@ccisstanfordu.org.

Pamela Baird

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