



May/June 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

### CCIS Stands Strong

As Karin Meiswinkel wrote in her "Reflections" on this pandemic year, we have weathered a very long and challenging year. Even though some of our programs were forced to go on hiatus because of the social distancing requirements, others were able to operate through the wonders of Zoom: Friday Morning Coffee, Virtual Welcome Partners, English Classes, English in Action, and the Spouse Education Fund. Bravo! And thank you to our program chairs and the wonderful volunteers who flexed with us!

Because of them, CCIS was able to offer a "lifeline" to many Internationals at Stanford who were facing a very isolating experience here in America. In July, when you receive your renewal letter, please be sure to check the boxes for all the programs in which you want to participate. Some members took a COVID-19 "gap year," so it's crucial that you sign up for your favorite programs again. The Internationals are looking forward to being able to meet with CCIS volunteers in person again. I know I can hardly wait!

I will end by echoing Karin's closing: we wish to thank all of you for your continued support and allegiance. It's so very important!

With sincere gratitude,

**Annette Isaacson**

CCIS President

[president@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:president@ccisstanfordu.org)



## 2021-2022 CCIS Board of Directors

In lieu of voting for the board at the Annual Meeting, we held the election by email. We were very gratified by the large response from members, who unanimously approved our slate of officers, electing **Annette Isaacson** as President, **Kate Khatseyeva** as Vice-President, and **Raul Felipa** as Treasurer for the term beginning on July 1, 2021.

We are so grateful that the following members have stepped up to serve on the Board again as Program Chairs: **Karin Meiswinkel** (Board Events), **Pamela Baird** (CCIS Notes), **Karen McNay** (Community Advisors), **Paul Heft** (Database), **MaryAnn Saunders** (English Classes), **Vivian Euzent** (English in Action, Internationals), **Elizabeth Ambuhl** (EIA Volunteer Recruitment), **Gwyn Dukes** (Friday Morning Coffee), **Pratixa Joshi** (Homestay), **Carol Hickingbotham** (Hospitality), **Susan Sanders** (Loan Closet), **Juliet Johnson** (Membership), **Tooran Oshikoji** (Professional Liaison), **Lydia Moret** (Publicity), **Dolly Verplank** (Spouse Education Fund), **Paula Brown** (Webmaster), and **Bob Spears** (Windows on the West).

**CCIS couldn't exist without its wonderful Board Members and our extraordinary volunteers.**

## Welcome to Raul Felipa

### New treasurer for CCIS Board

The Board is pleased to announce the selection of **Raul Felipa** as the treasurer of CCIS. Raul is the Finance Manager for the Stanford Department of Anesthesiology. When approached by Annette, Raul decided to join the Board as a way to become more active again in the community. Previously Raul volunteered to help coach his children's soccer and baseball efforts.



Raul and his wife have been living in Sunnyvale for over 25 years. They have three children. He enjoys working around the house, swimming, hiking and investing.

Several years ago the family hosted a PhD student from Singapore through the **Homestay** program. Raul states, "It looked like a fun way to help someone transition into our community. It was a great way to introduce my kids to someone from a different country. "When he was growing, up his parents hosted young adults from the performing arts group "Up with People". Raul remembers their brief visit with fond memories.

The Board welcomes the addition of Raul.

## A Volunteer Report

### Feeling fortunate

#### My time spent hosting international students



Being a mom has taught me to be more appreciative of whatever comes into my life. One of my most fortunate or lucky moments was when I applied for a position to volunteer with the **CCIS Hospitality** program in the fall of 2017.

I vividly remember writing to Ms. Carol Hickingbotham, the chairperson of the program, of how excited I felt to be able to contribute to the international student community at Stanford University. I wanted to share with students my own experiences of having been an international student from my birth country of India, and how my journey had taken me through the highs and lows of student life.

My real life story of working 20 hour jobs on-campus on a near empty stomach, to graduating top of my MBA class with a "best outgoing student" award at the University's Commencement ceremony to working in an industry for which I had so much passion in one of the greatest cities in the world... I strongly felt like I had something to say to the brightest of bright minds who I would meet through a program such as the CCIS Hospitality program.

My first student was a woman named Yutong from China, who was pursuing a degree in Asian American studies from the school of Humanities and Sciences. I met and spoke with her on campus, where she felt most comfortable. She was so eager to talk to me about her first year living away from her younger brother and parents. Since then, I have had the opportunity to host a female student from Tel Aviv, Israel, whose spouse was a post-doctoral student at Stanford University. A third female student was from China, who, like Yutong, was pursuing an undergrad degree in the school of Humanities & Sciences.

One central theme which I found with the three students is that they were all eager to learn and unafraid to be themselves. They were brave and open to new experiences. I find these qualities to be the hallmark of a typical international student who has made Stanford campus her or his home.

As we enter into the post Covid era with vaccination initiatives firmly in place, I am hoping that CCIS can continue to open its loving arms to welcome more of these young and bright minds. The opportunities to nurture students but also gratefully learn from them is something CCIS members value.

I am excitedly looking forward to those opportunities and I know that I am not alone.

Warm regards,

**Arthi Britto**

## 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](mailto:notes@ccisstanfordu.org).

Pamela Baird

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