



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

### Sharing Our Light

As I write this column, it is Winter Solstice, the shortest, darkest day of the year. Today, a friend brought a little light into my world. I went for a walk in the Baylands with a woman who had served as my Junior Counselor fifty years ago when I was a Counselor at Day Camp in Vallejo. This is the first time we've met since camp

On our walk, she told me, "You saved my life! When I signed up for camp, my father had just died and I was a lonely teen, living in a new city." She continued, "Your smile and your positive attitude brightened my life. You really SAW me. I want you to know that your kindness lives on every day through me because I treat my students just as you treated me." She certainly brightened my day!

In many ways this is what we all do as volunteers for CCIS. We have a welcoming smile and a positive attitude and really SEE the internationals as individuals. We brighten their lives during what could be a lonely time for many of them.

As the days start to lengthen and the sun brightens our lives, we can all bring a little light of our own into the world. Thank you for all you do to welcome and support the internationals at Stanford

**Happy New Year!**  
Annette

Thanks for being a part of CCIS and supporting our International Community at Stanford.  
[president@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:president@ccisstanfordu.org)

## 2021 Holiday Luncheon Holiday Cheer Celebrated



Left: Talita Souto-Camelo, Santa (Bob Spears), and Karin Meiswinkel.  
Right: Carolyn Gannon and Shima Alizadeh.

Seeing CCIS Board member **Bob Spears** dressed up as Santa was a fun way to celebrate CCIS returning to in-person events. The Holiday Luncheon attendees enjoyed a sumptuous lunch at Michaels at Shoreline in a lovely room overlooking the pond and golf course. **Annette Isaacson** greeted us and served as Emcee for the luncheon.

A welcome talk from **Shalini Bhutani** (Executive Director of the Bechtel I-Center) reinforced how much the Bechtel Center staff appreciates CCIS and the assistance we provide to the International Community at Stanford.

We were fortunate to hear from students (or spouses) who have benefitted from their interaction with CCIS. **Talita Souto-Camelo** of Brazil described the assistance she received from EIA. After only four years of learning English, she landed an impressive job as a lab manager at the Stanford School of Medicine.

**Shima Alizadeh**, who participated in the Homestay program, received her PhD from Stanford in Data Analytics and today works for the AI lab at Amazon. She credited her Homestay family, **Carolyn and Terry Gannon**, with providing her a wonderful and supportive way to start her life at Stanford.

The recipient of the SEF (Spouse Education Fund) Jane Reber Memorial Grant was presented to the group by Jane Reber's daughter, Rori Reber. **Seunghee Lee** plans to use her grant funds to learn through Coursera Plus, an online education platform. More information about her is included in a separate article.

It was inspiring to hear each speaker extol the importance of the services and mission of CCIS and how the many volunteers for CCIS changed their lives for the better. Wow! A truly heartwarming way to close off two tough years of pandemic.

Happy holidays to each of you. May we stay healthy and continue contributing to the betterment of those whom we serve.

Jeff Greenwald Secretary, CCIS

## 2021 Jane Reber SEF Grant



This year's Jane Reber grantee is Seunghee Lee, from South Korea. She was a pharmacist in Korea before accompanying her husband to Stanford.

They arrived in March of 2020, (just in time for COVID-19) and she has had a baby since that time. They expect to be here for 5 years for her husband's postdoctoral studies in the Department of Psychiatry.

Seunghee joined us at the Holiday luncheon with her son.

Since it is a very lengthy process to get licensed to practice pharmacy in the US, Seunghee wants to build her background in other areas, such as Google Data Analytics. She has chosen Coursera Plus as her preferred option for using the grant. This online program will allow her to take courses in a wide variety of subjects and earn a professional certificate.

Seunghee mentioned an interest in photography (one of Jane's passion was travel photography) as one of the courses she would like to follow. We are delighted that Jane's daughter Rori met and presented the grant to Seunghee!

Those interested in establishing a SEF fund in honor or in memory of a loved one can contact Dolly Verplank: [dolly@billverplank.com](mailto:dolly@billverplank.com)

Submitted by Gwyn Dukes

## The Jane Reber Memorial Spouse Education Fund Grant

In 1989, our mother, Jane Reber, began volunteering with the CCIS English-in-Action program as a tutor. Little did she know this would blossom into an integral 22-year relationship with her students, spanning multiple countries and much travel.

Each year she helped spouses develop their vocabulary and, most importantly, their confidence. As a result, she got to know numerous students personally and they remained friends long after they left the program. She kept in touch and visited several students of the English-in-Action program in South Korea and Japan and got to know their families.



The beauty of this program was that it enabled her to mentor, discuss current affairs, and ultimately forge lasting friendships. She was a dedicated world traveller and passionate photographer—what a perfect combination of mentorship, friendship, and profession!

She got more than she gave from supporting the confidence and development of so many of the students and spouses. It was rewarding to her to see them build their speaking confidence—one of the more challenging aspects of learning English.

Our family has donated to the Spouse Education Fund and the I-Center Spouse Programs as a loving tribute to our mother and the many years and relationships that began there. She loved being a part of the program and looked forward to her new student matches and the weekly meetings.

We hope it inspires others as much as it did for her and for many years to come.

Sheldon, Rori, and Kate Reber

### 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**

CCIS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
CCIS Notes is published by  
[The Community Committee for International Students at Stanford University](http://www.ccisstanfordu.org)

For more information, contact:  
[info@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:info@ccisstanfordu.org)