



Left to right: Carolyn Gannon, new incoming student Timothy Kennett from the United Kingdom, Kathi Rittenhouse, and Carole Hessler.

## Community Advisors welcome new students

by Donna Shoemaker

This year, Stanford University welcomed 950 international graduate students. About 20% arrived during the summer months, but the majority of students arrived between September 7th and September 22nd, which is the time our CCIS Community Advisor volunteers are hard at work at the Bechtel International Center. Community Advisors welcome the new students to Stanford and provide practical information materials and one-on-one recommendations for buying a bike, a new phone or SIM card, getting a driver's license, campus events, a campus map, CCIS programs (such as the CCIS Hospitality Program), banking options,

the Loan Closet, and much more. It is exciting to say, "Welcome to Stanford University!" to such engaging, diverse, and eager incoming students. Many countries were represented by one student. The largest country representations are China, India, South Korea, and Canada. Here are three of our Community Advisor volunteers welcoming the 600th student to receive the coveted Community Advisors information Red Folder.

If you are interested in being a Community Advisor in fall 2017, please send an email to [MemberServices@CCISstanfordU.org](mailto:MemberServices@CCISstanfordU.org).

## Loan Closet numbers up in 2016

by Karin Meiswinkel

During the three weeks of Orientation for this school year beginning on the 1st of September, the Loan Closet experienced a very busy period providing and servicing household items to the influx of International students. These items included flatware, plates, bowls, glasses, mugs, cookware, dish drainers, waste baskets, laundry baskets, sheets, blankets and towels. Setting up their living quarters with these necessities is such a welcome asset to their time at Stanford for graduate students, visiting scholars, and post-docs. The current fee to take advantage of the Loan Closet is \$20 for a single and \$40 for a couple. Given its ever-increasing popularity, the loan closet served 141 students this year, an increase from last year's count. We often receive feedback of appreciation and gratitude from those who have taken advantage of this upon their arrival and throughout the year.

Member donations are an essential part of the success of this program which serves such a worthy purpose. Donations of items and even cash for the purchase of selected items are accepted year round. Extra items in need are purchased from Ikea to keep the shelves well stocked. A warm thank you to each and every one of you for your contributions. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to donate gently used items in good condition. Currently those items especially in high demand are cookware, e.g., pots and pans, cookie sheets, muffin tins, and the like.

You may call Bob Spears (650) 493-5898 for a pick-up of your donated items or any questions you may have.



## Friday Coffee welcomes new families

by Gwyn Dukes

Each fall's arrival of new international students brings family members from around the world who accompany their partner to Stanford. These family members are an important part of the international community at Stanford, and the I-Center and CCIS provide a number of programs for them.

The spouse or partner accompanying a student or post-doc faces the challenge of making a transition from her previous life (career, family, friends) to a totally new environment. S(he) is faced with creating a new identity and a new life in an unfamiliar setting. The Friday Coffee provides an ideal "point of entry" by providing a sense of community among family members,

and offering information about ways to enrich their lives by suggesting local resources here in the Bay Area relevant to their special interests.

Each year at the beginning of Fall Quarter a 'Welcome Friday Coffee' is sponsored by the I-Center and CCIS. This year's event was held on the first Friday of Fall Quarter, September 30, and attracted 100 spouses/partners and 29 children! Local organizations (Palo Alto Adult School, the Cantor Art Center, Deborah's Palm, American Association of University Women, and CCIS programs) were invited to staff tables to introduce their programs to the newcomers. This made it easy for international spouses to learn about

places they can take classes or volunteer in an area of special interest, and to become familiar with their new community.

Ragna Kaehler, coordinator of I-Center Spouse Programs, introduced the line-up of teachers of Classes for International Spouses. These teachers, who are spouses themselves, have developed classes to share their knowledge and expertise with others in the spouse community. Classes include a wide range of topics, from photography, yoga and several types of cooking to project management, job search workshops, a book group, languages (Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese and Korean) and more!

The opportunity to meet the teachers made it easy for new spouses to find out more about each class, and overcome any shyness to participate.

The newcomers were eager to meet each other and make new friends, as well as gathering information about their new community. CCIS volunteers and a team of spouse volunteers welcomed the new spouses and introduced them to others with similar interests. Durga, from India, had brought her 18-month old son, and was glad to find other mothers of toddlers to get acquainted with. Namae, a Japanese woman whose husband is from the Netherlands, had just moved from Holland with her 13- and 10- year old children. Silvia (from Italy) was glad to meet Maren (from Norway), and discover that they both had teenage sons in the same high school here, and they lived very close to one another! Maren had biked to the Friday Coffee, and inspired Silvia to buy a bike, so she could skip the bus and they could bike to future Friday Coffees together. Aritrika from India is a gifted artist, and wants to find places to develop her skills. At the Welcome Friday Coffee she could learn about local centers that teach classes in art, and about the Spouse Education Fund, which can provide small grants to help spouses pursue their special interests

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Photo by Daniela Dounce

while accompanying their partner here.

The festive atmosphere of the Welcome Friday Coffee was enhanced by special decorations and cakes donated by the CCIS, Safeway and the Prolific Oven, in addition to home-made treats brought by returning Friday Coffee participants.

We are glad to continue the Friday Coffee every week that Stanford is in session, to bring together international spouses and families (both new and returning) and CCIS volunteers. (The total attendance at the Friday Coffees during the month of September was 313 adults and 120 children, averaging 62 adults and 24 children per week.) Those who were new in September have returned to Friday Coffees in later weeks, and enjoyed the special Halloween festivities at the October 29 event. We hope they'll continue to stop by each week, throughout the year, as they become "old-timers" who can share their experiences with the future newcomers at Stanford!



Photos by Daniela Dounce

## Ice Cream Social: A repeat afternoon delight

by Karin Meiswinkel

A second annual Ice Cream Social was held on August 11th by the Events Committee on the patio of the Bechtel International Center from 3:30 to 5 PM. This wildly popular event featured a contest for the best tasting and best looking ice cream sundaes this year. All of the entrants were children. Six great flavors of ice cream and various toppings and decorations were provided. Cookies n' Cream once again appeared to be the reigning flavor of choice.

With volunteers scooping tirelessly, 85-100 people enjoyed ice cream – an increased attendance over last year on another clement 70 degree day. The judges were Robert Paugh, Amrita Kahaly, and Shalini Bhutani, all whom put serious consideration into the taste and presentation of the entrant sundaes in order to declare the winners. These children were

presented with gift certificates to "Smitten" which features custom made ice cream.

The afternoon was very festive with a half dozen new post-docs, people and their families who had never attended a CCIS event before, enjoying themselves. Many lingered after the ice cream was gone and past 5PM continuing to socialize. It was deemed a great success by all. More photos are posted on the CCIS website to view and enjoy.





## CCIS Homestay student wins the 125th Anniversary Stanford Official Postcard Contest

by Donna Shoemaker

Homestay student Chen Ran arrived at Stanford University in September 2010 from Tsingtao, China to pursue a PhD in Neurobiology. His study focus is on pain receptors. He was matched with CCIS Homestay host volunteers Donna and John Shoemaker. Donna and John knew right away that Chen was very thoughtful and organized because he emailed a photo of himself just before his flight departed from Beijing. He was standing next to his suitcases and wearing the clothes he would be wearing when he arrived. He wanted to be sure our car was big enough for his suitcases! He was the last person out of the immigration gate, and we were so happy to see him, looking tired, but just as he was dressed in his photo. He stayed with us five days and that was the beginning of a very wonderful friendship.

Not only was Chen skilled at neurobiology, he was curious about many areas. He has taught himself to play the harp, the guitar, and the flute, and he is an excellent cook as well. "Chen and I have watched many Warriors games together over the years and we have shared many good times," John said.

Chen mentioned an interest in photography about two years ago, so the Shoemakers connected him with a friend who is a lifelong nature photographer. After three years in the U.S., Chen got married to a biology student at Indiana University, JinJin Zhu, so now she is a part of this Homestay friendship. John Shoemaker is also an IU alum. JinJin and Chen have taken many trips together around the US during school holidays, and they especially enjoy capturing wildlife and waterfall photos. They once went hiking in Florida and JinJin texted a photo of an approaching alligator to Donna, who then told her to "RUN!"

Taking his photography skills to a new level, Chen began to take photos of the campus. Earlier this year he had discovered there was a contest he could enter for the official Stanford 125th anniversary postcard. Realizing winning that honor was a long shot, Chen entered anyway, submitting his twilight photo taken of the Memorial Church with a Sigma 10-20mm f4/5.6 and a DX body. His father had sent him the lens as a gift and his father-in-law had sent him the tripod. Chen won!

You can now purchase Chen's postcard at the Stanford Bookstore. The winning prize was three packages of postcards. Chen said, "I am very proud and honored to celebrate Stanford's 125th Anniversary by my postcard."

The first people to hear the good news were his Homestay hosts, who Chen presented with a signed and framed copy of the photograph. Donna and John added, "We know Chen will have many honors as a biologist in the future, and also as a very talented photographer. We are very proud of Chen and how eagerly he has embraced the U.S. culture with his energy and his many talents. We have learned so much about his life, his family, and his home country thorough the Homestay experience, and we are looking forward to meeting his parents in June 2017 at his graduation."

## Hospitality volunteers form new bonds



**Top:** Volunteer Diane Churchill (not pictured) welcomes two new and two returning students

**Bottom:** Dr. Wayne Johnson and his wife Juliet (not pictured) enjoyed hosting Danny and Angel from Taiwan, along with Dr. Li Le and Li Gang from China

## Windows on the West Film Series

by Karin Meiswinkel

Who doesn't enjoy movies and films? Almost everyone would attest to the fact that they are a favorite American pastime. Windows on the West is a weekly film series held on Friday evenings at the I-Center in the Assembly Room. It has very recently become a joint program with Bechtel and is now offered to CCIS members as well as internationals. This weekly series runs throughout the academic year and is designed to help first-year Stanford International students understand American culture in a relaxed setting. Adaptation and understanding a completely new culture and environment can be very stressful and overwhelming. Students and CCIS volunteers and members can intermingle, learn and laugh together, while creating a better understanding of one another. Dinner is offered as well.

Come at 6PM for dinner and socializing with International students and other CCIS members. The film begins at 6:30 p.m. Free parking is available in Lots P and A.

Bob Spears is the chair of this program. He makes excellent choices of films to be enjoyed every Friday. If you would like to help Bob set up dinner, greet guests, or help in any way, please connect with Bob at [bob@cultureconnection.net](mailto:bob@cultureconnection.net). You may, of course, bring a guest, a friend, international student, spouse, visiting scholar, or potential CCIS member.

### Schedule:

November 18 - To Kill A Mockingbird (1962)  
November 25 - No film (due to Thanksgiving)  
December 2 - The Cardinal (1963)  
December 9 - Spotlight (2015)  
December 16 - Adam's Rib (1949)  
December 20 - What's Up Doc? (1972)  
December 23 - Some Like It Hot (1959)  
December 27 - Shakespeare In Love (1998)  
December 30 - Seabiscuit (2003)  
January 3 - Rising Sun (1993)  
January 6 - The Mission (1986)

## EIA volunteer reception

by Karin Meiswinkel

A reception for EIA volunteers was hosted by Marsha Alper and Carole Hessler, the co-chairs of the very popular English in Action Program offered to Internationals at Stanford University. It was held at Carole's lovely home in Palo Alto on October 6th. The event was well attended by 21 EIA volunteers who were treated to a table of brunch fare and beverages. Lively conversation was abundant as volunteers became acquainted and exchanged experiences and ideas with one another. It was a warm and inviting

atmosphere which everyone seemed to enjoy tremendously. It afforded an opportunity for new connections with others in the program and a chance to touch base with those already acquainted. Some volunteers spoke and there was a variety of suggestions as well as some entertaining story telling. This event further enriched and unified the benefits derived from the volunteers of this prodigious program. Given its success, more of the kind will be likely be held in the future.

## Spouse Education Fund (SEF) opens new doors for International spouses

by Gwyn Dukes

This November, international spouses who wish to pursue their professional or personal goals may apply and be interviewed for grants from the CCIS Spouse Education Fund. Small grants (\$100 to \$500) will be awarded in early December to enable spouses to take a class in a local institution.

Notes of gratitude from past grant recipients illustrate the value of these grants in opening new doors to enrich their experience here. Grantee Sabrina Sehr, of Austria said this about her course in Project Management from Stanford Continuing Studies:

"Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity! Without the grant I would not have been able to take the class. I learned a lot about Project Management and it gave me confidence and a good background for working here in the US. Since then, I am applying for jobs in and around Stanford and it opened a lot of doors for me. Hiring managers are very impressed. So fingers crossed that I'll soon find something! Thanks again!!"

Those who wish to contribute to this year's grant awards can donate now at [ccisstanfordu.org/volunteers/SpouseEd.htm](http://ccisstanfordu.org/volunteers/SpouseEd.htm) or send email to [sefcomm@ccisstanfordu.org](mailto:sefcomm@ccisstanfordu.org)

### Events Calendar

**Dec. 1** - Holiday Luncheon  
11:30 am to 1 pm  
Michael's at Shoreline  
**Dec. 6** - SEF Award reception  
4 p.m.  
Bechtel International Center  
**Dec. 9**  
Last day of classes  
**Jan. 9**  
Classes resume  
**Jan. 9**  
CCIS board meeting

### CCIS is now on Facebook!

Former Communique co-editor Michelle Laker has kindly agreed to set up and maintain a Facebook page to keep everyone updated about CCIS programs, events and more. Be sure to visit our page at [facebook.com/ccisatstanford](https://facebook.com/ccisatstanford).



# CCIS Leadership

## President's column

**Karen McNay**



Wow – what an amazing start to the 2016-2017 school year and the 64th Anniversary of CCIS! Our awesome group of Community Advisor volunteers welcomed over 600 incoming international graduates during the first two-and-a-half weeks of September, cheerfully giving information and guidance, selling tickets for the Muir Woods and UC Berkeley/SF bus trips, in addition to four dinners serving over 120 students at each dinner. In support of the Bechtel staff our volunteers assisted in serving all four dinners and over 600 students at the Welcome Reception. A huge thank you to all of you for your cheerful dedication and support. Carol Hickingbotham, Chair of the Hospitality Program, has welcomed and matched 76 very grateful students with 52 host families. Phil Berghausen,

our Homestay Chair, matched 37 students with 23 host families. When possible the students always enjoy being included in Thanksgiving and holiday festivities. All of our programs always welcome new volunteers.

We started September with the Loan Closet overflowing with merchandise and within 2 weeks the shelves were pretty empty. Bob Spears, Loan Closet Chair was busy at Ikea supplementing as many items as possible. All the students are so grateful. We continue to help students and scholars throughout the year and always gratefully appreciate and welcome any gently used kitchen and household items. Carole Hessler and Marsha Alper continue to actively match students with EIA partners. The English classes, Friday Morning Coffee and Professional Liaison programs are in full swing and heavily attended. Judi Chun, Events Chair, has several fun events lined up for the new year...stay tuned.

Membership Renewals continue to arrive so if you haven't sent yours please do and be sure to update the programs that interest you. Reviews of all programs are on our website: [ccisstanfordu.org](http://ccisstanfordu.org). All of our programs always welcome new volunteers. It is thanks to all of you that CCIS remains such a tremendous success.

I hope to see you at our annual Holiday Luncheon at Michael's at Shoreline on Thursday, December 1st.

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## Editor's column

**Karin Meiswinkel & Amanda Preece**



It's been said that Autumn carries more gold in its pocket than all the other seasons. As life on campus at Stanford comes alive with the new school year taking place, CCIS, with all the programs and venues it offers to the new arrival of internationals, shines brightly.

We take tremendous pride in the excellence of the accomplishments and attributes of CCIS.

It stands out as a sterling example of a unique organization offering a plethora of wonderful programs and services to all internationals entering the portals of Stanford University. The beginning of a new school year here presents many challenges. Experiencing life in an entirely new and different culture, lifestyle, and environment can be very overwhelming. There is a great deal to learn in the milieu. Many adjustments and adaptations are necessary in addition to the major focus required for their studies, research, projects and academic requirements during their time here. Applause for CCIS and all it affords and offers has become well known and acknowledged with great acclaim. It is a champion and a cutting edge example for the support and needs of internationals, well respected and revered. Many thanks to all who make it possible and in addition, such a role model on a national and global scale.

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[www.ccisStanfordU.org](http://www.ccisStanfordU.org)

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## **Another academic year begins**

### **Shalini Bhutani**



Many thanks to CCIS for helping the Bechtel staff complete another successful orientation program. The Bechtel International Center is one of the first places that many international students come to when they get to Stanford, and for graduate students, CCIS members provide not only invaluable information about settling in at Stanford, but also a warm welcome that sets the right tone for their time at Stanford, and creates a lasting memory of how Stanford welcomed them to campus.

This year we welcomed 965 new International graduate students and 171 undergraduate students from over 70 countries to Stanford. China remains the top sending country for graduate students, followed by India, Canada, South Korea and France. Among undergraduate students too, the top sending country remains China, followed by Canada, India, Brazil,

and the United Kingdom. Check out Bechtel's homepage to see some of the new faces on campus and hear their welcome messages in many different languages.

I'm also very pleased to announce that Elsa Gontrum has accepted the position of Bechtel's new Associate Director. Elsa has a PhD in Art History from Yale University, and has been a scholar advisor at Bechtel for the last five years. She is a dedicated internationalist, has both immigration and overseas scholarship advising experience, and is respected by colleagues at Bechtel and throughout Stanford.

Welcome to the new academic year!  
Shalini

