



### Our Mission

is to bring together people of diverse national origins to foster intercultural understanding, to promote awareness of our roles as citizens in the wider global community, and to facilitate partnerships and resources that enrich the vitality and diversity of the Centre Region.



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**Global Connections is a nonprofit organization supported by the Centre County United Way, Penn State's Global Programs, and members of the community.**

Global Connections is a secular organization that does not promote, endorse, nor is allied with any religion or religious organization.



# Connections

## A Global Connections Publication

427 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802 • (814) 863-3927  
 globalconnections@ip.psu.edu • www.gc-cc.org

## Speakers Program Brings Lessons to Life

The third and fourth grade classes at Easterly Parkway Elementary School sat enthralled by the visiting speakers who had come to tell the children about their home countries in Africa. It was late November, the week before Thanksgiving break, but the urge to interact with the speaker was obvious as the kids bounced in their seats, waving their hands in the air, begging to be chosen to ask a question.



Charmaine du Plessis, a visiting Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow from South Africa, patiently called on each child until she had answered all of their questions and heard all of their comments. She then went on to tell the children about her home country; the animals found there, the geography around her home and the foods she prepares for her children. She also had plenty of colorful photos to show, keeping the students eyes glued to the big screen at the front of the room. Although the children had been studying Africa for several weeks, only two had ever been there. For most, it was their first opportunity to learn about African countries from actual African people.

Also speaking to the students that afternoon were Judith Sakubu, from Burundi, and Sydney Teixeira, a Penn State undergrad from Angola. The speakers all commented that they thoroughly enjoyed talking to the children and hope to repeat the experience. Sydney even later reflected on his Facebook page, "Just finished teaching 3rd graders about Angola and they were all amazing. This might be my calling..." Easterly teacher, Dee Finley noted, "...having visitors from the countries we are studying come into the classroom gives comparison between what we are learning through all our media and the real life experiences of the people. It expands the students' learning and offers a valuable opportunity for them to make those lasting connections. We're grateful to have Global Connections do this for our students."



## Cultural Lunches —

*Held on the third Wednesday of the month, about six times each year, GC's Cultural Lunches consist of an ethnic buffet and a cultural presentation produced by internationals from a specific country. It provides a forum for multicultural understanding and affords internationals the opportunity to become involved in the community.*

*Contact us if you're not on our luncheon email list!*

## Lunch Hour Journeys to Iraq and Pakistan



Majid and Hassan Khudhair stand proudly in front of the new Iraqi flag after giving a moving presentation on their home country.

Guests at our October Cultural Lunch were delighted with the delicious variety of food from Iraq, prepared by the Hussain family of State College. Liqaa and Waleed, along with Liqaa's mother, who was visiting from Iraq, prepared a sumptuous array of savory and sweet dishes for local community members to sample. As the guests enjoyed the wonderful lunch, Liqaa and Waleed's young sons, Hassan and Majid, dressed in traditional Iraqi clothing, gave an informative and heart-felt presentation about their home country and their happiness since coming to the United States three years ago through the Department of State's Refugee Relocation Program. There wasn't a dry eye in the crowd after Hassan's request that the guests stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the US flag at the end of his presentation.

November brought a quick visit to Pakistan, courtesy of visiting Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow Ali Shah. Ali and several volunteers from Pakistan, India, China, Taiwan, Cambodia, Hungary, Burundi, Swaziland, the United Arab Emirates and the USA worked together to create several traditional Pakistani dishes for the guests to enjoy. Ali's presentation about his home country helped everyone to better understand the complicated relationship between the US and Pakistan. A hot issue and piquant food made for a spicy afternoon!



Ali Shah from Pakistan.

### Give the Gift of Intercultural Community and Understanding!

You can donate to Global Connections in honor of the holidays, a birthday, or other special occasion, or just in the name of friendship!

We'll notify your honoree with a card in your name and send you a receipt for your records. Your donation is tax-deductible and goes directly to support our programs.

**Please send the completed form and check (made out to Global Connections) to:**

**Global Connections  
427 Boucke Bldg.  
University Park, PA 16802**

### Give-as-a-Gift Form

Please tell us your name/address:

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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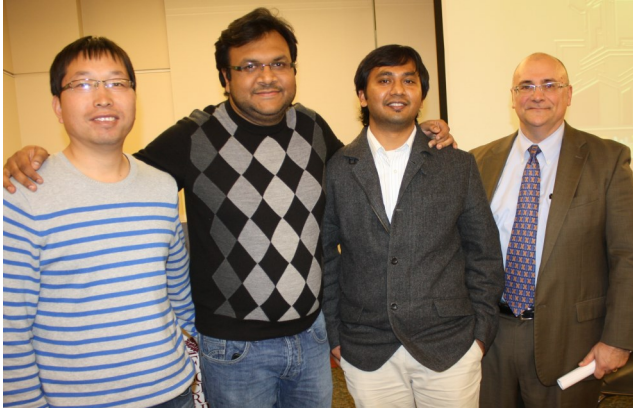
*Thank you!*

## World Affairs Forum —

*Held twice a year, GC's World Affairs Forum brings global issues to the community for public discussion and provides opportunity for local residents and PSU faculty and students to learn about and discuss a broad range of international issues.*

### Feeding the World: Challenges and Solutions for Large Populations

Food security is a global challenge that needs to be tackled urgently. The United Nations reports that over the next few decades, our world will need to produce 70% more food [as measured in calories] to feed our growing populations. GC's World Affairs Forum this semester, held on November 19th, featured four panelists who discussed the issues of food security, sustainable production, innovation, and the various roles of non-profit, for-profit and governmental organizations in creating a sustainable future.



Weihoa Zhang, Khanjan Mehta, Roshan Nayak and Spiro Stefanou gave attendees a lot to think about where food is concerned.

Roshan Nayak discussed an example of changing farming practices of small-scale farmers in India. With the help of a local non-profit organization, some farmers are working with the state government and

an international conglomerate. He noted that this creative alliance is trying to encourage organic practices, reduce the use of chemical fertilizers, and achieve a sustainable farming model.

Weihoa Zhang's research focuses on sustainable irrigation practices in China. Mining companies are fast-depleting water resources, and many areas are facing a severe scarcity of water --- for drinking as well as farming. Zhang examined farming techniques which help farmers combat the growing water crisis by harnessing available resources more productively, noting that the state government is supportive of these new techniques.

Khanjan Mehta described how international inventors and technicians are teaming up with local native experts to produce solutions to communities' problems in various locations in Africa. Arguing provocatively that non-profit organizations and governments can slow down the process of innovation, Mehta extolled the virtues of a more independent, profit-based model that can harness native knowledge and provide speedier, sometimes short-term, responses to the problems identified by local communities.

Spiro Stefanou provided an overview of the American food system --- from production, manufacturing and packaging, distribution, retailing, marketing to consumption --- within the United States. He also discussed the interplay between retailers and consumers.

A very lively and spirited discussion followed each of the panelists' presentations, cut short only because the event ran over time! The audience was a diverse mix of students, faculty, community members, and non-profit professionals with backgrounds in the Social Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Humanities and Engineering.





## 2nd Annual Women's International Night Out!

Guests happily modeled silk sarees, Arab jalabiyas and Chinese daxiushan from around the world while enjoying an evening of international cuisine, wines, crafts, and dance demonstrations at Global Connections' 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Women's International Night Out, held November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Minitab World Headquarters in State College.

The chill in the air outside was quickly dispelled by the warmth of the cultural exchange taking place around the tropical plants and gurgling waterfall of the beautiful Minitab atrium. Guests were encouraged to try the wide variety of international finger foods, wines and non-alcoholic beverages while watching dance performances from China, Iran and Rwanda or shopping at the silent auction and various fair trade booths set up around the room. The women-only event also gave guests the chance to get an intricate henna tattoo, have a chair massage or participate in one of several small craft

projects including Mexican Corn Husk Angels, Guatemalan Worry Dolls, Japanese Paper Art, Turkish Marbling Art ("Ebru"),



internationally-themed magnets and having one's name written in various languages. This very successful event raised over \$4,000 to support Global Connections' programs.



Check out our Facebook page for more photos!



Thank you to all who made our second annual  
~ *Women's International Night Out* ~  
such a huge and lovely success!

Minitab World Headquarters  
Mr. Bruce Pincus, Minitab General Counsel  
Joy Vincent Killian & Richard Killian  
Cecilia Mills & Calming Points Massage Therapy  
Ritter Sport Chocolates, USA  
Pieter & Lida Ouwehand  
Cozy Thai Bistro  
Weis Markets  
Far Corners Oriental Market

Polly Dunn, Jayashree Sonti, Jie Xu, Na Zhao, Vanda Hurnyi-Mikóné, Sharon Shen, Joanne Green, Josephine Carubia, Mariko Oue, Mizuho Kawasaki, Eri Ozawa, Anupama Haleshappa Ratnamma, Stacie Chandler, Donna Hamao-Langdon, Gulay Baltali, Liqaa Hamzah, Hina Ashraf, Noelia Torres, Eunice Hockenberry & Marilyn, Nicha Thanarugchok & Friends, Negar Hashemian, Samin Poorzad, Mona Hatami, Maryam Neshastehriz, Yeganeh Aghazamani, Mahsa Morid, Zahra Niroo, Olga Buchko, Rufaida Kabir, Sabera Bushra, Julia Ma, Kristine Lai, Jaia Clingham-David, Grace Hakizimana, Caitlin Maher, Amber Evans, Nicole Franklin, Varada Vaidya, Mairi Sim, Kat Oliva, Patty Nordstrom, Joanie Eyster, Gloria Chen, Megna Gopu, Vivian Guo, Deepa Yenugudhati, Xiaoyun Zhao, Luwei Liu, Allan Calumpang, Yasser Soleimani and all of the many wonderful volunteers who set up, staffed, cooked, donated food and helped to clean up for our event.

*And thank you, all who attended our Second Annual Women's International Night Out!*

## New Ways to Practice English and Engage

There's always a need for more opportunity to practice English speaking and listening skills and to engage with others in real-life and meaningful ways. Now, in addition to our other weekly English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) classes, which include an ESL-through-Cooking class, English language learners can attend two new GC groups.

**Global Voices** meets every week — internationals and Americans—to sing secular music from around the world together. Participants are from different cultures and backgrounds and rehearsals are in English. Plans are to hold performances at area nursing homes. Do you like to sing and meet new people? Join Global Voices!

**Conversation & Crafts** is a new adult ESL group that meets every other week for arts & crafts and conversation! The class is taught by volunteer community members Lisa Baumgartner and Kelly Keefe. After her first meeting, Yeji Lee from South Korea wrote, "... there were kindly teachers, various national friends and homemade cookies that teachers made by herself. And also we had the craft and were able to speak each other in English, sometimes took photos... ^^". As soon as I arrived at my home, I decorated with my crafting. I thank to the Global Connection for joining like this class to me." And Ai Yogo from Japan wrote, "Yesterday, I had so great time at the ESL class. It's was so wonderful that I could talk with many people who was born in the other countries. Also I enjoyed making the christmas wreath. After I get home, I could complete the wreath. I felt so happy. I look forward to taking part in the class next time."



Yeji Lee (center) with teachers,  
Lisa Baumgartner and Kelly Keefe.

# Commonality of Human Experience Found in Translation

GC's 9th annual *Found in Translation: World Poetry Read by World People* event was held on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Listeners and readers gathered in Webster's Bookstore and Café where Prof. Vincent Colapietro started off the evening with a quick discussion on translation and apt words by Salman Rushdie: "It is normally supposed that something always gets lost in translation; I cling obstinately to the notion that something can also be gained." This year our readers read in twenty different languages --- including, for the first time, American Sign Language! --- and offered the audience a wonderful sampling of how people communicate differently across the world. The English translations of the poems revealed, despite their overt differences, the underlying universality of human experiences!



(Top from left) Tugce Tuncdemir of Turkey, Maryam Peer of Iran (reading in Farsi), Vanda Hurnyi Mikóné of Hungary, Jaroslav Jansky of the Czech Republic, Diana Beryland of Russia, Ali Zaman Shah of Pakistan, Renata Horvatek of Croatia, Vyjayanthi Sankar of India, Vincent Colapietro of USA (hidden!), Judith Sakubu of Burundi, Chenyang Xie of China, Vusal Hasanov of Ajerbaijan, Erika Anseloni of Brazil, and Ephraim Muchada Govere of Zimbabwe. (Middle row, seated, from left) Amal Sayed of Saudi Arabia (American Sign Language), Sung Huh of South Korea and her daughter, Toni. (Front row, kneeling, from left) Maziar Memar of Iran, Pieter Ouwehand of Holland, Agnieszka Gabor of Poland, Julie Pelletier of Canada, Iris Hvanndal of Iceland, and Chaisiri Suthapradit of Thailand.

***Thank you to all who attended, and to Webster's for hosting the reading!***

## Volunteer Conversation Partners and Friendship Hosts Needed!

**Start a friendship that lasts throughout the year (or lifetime!) by becoming a Conversation Partner or International Friendship Program volunteer.**

Internationals often face a lengthy wait list as their numbers exceed that of our American volunteers. Through our **Conversation Partners** program, applicants practice their conversational English one-on-one. No foreign language experience is needed to volunteer, as you meet with your partner to chat in English.

The **International Friendship Program** matches people for cultural exchange and friendship— friends get together to share a meal, attend an event, or include each other once or twice a month in whatever they might be doing anyway.

**No housing is involved**, and the experience is mutually beneficial as you and your new international friend(s) learn about each other's cultures. In addition to the internationals we have on our waiting list, new people will be arriving in January and throughout the year!





# Building Community with Pumpkins

Through GC's International Friendship and Conversation Partners Programs, Americans invited their international friends to learn the art of pumpkin carving and enjoy an autumn potluck buffet. For most internationals carving a Jack-o'-Lantern was a first-time experience.



Hassan Khudhair from Iraq carves as his mother, Liqaa Hamzah looks on.



Sharon Shen's son, August, gave Sharon moral support.



Vivian Guo, Jianqing Hu and daughter, Coco Hu, from China.



Nedal from Iraq shows off her new creation.



Anupama Haleshappa from India.



Fang Cheng and Yu Chen from China.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

## Register Online for Global Connections Programs!

Over the last year more than 900 people have used Global Connections' online registration form to sign up for programs such as Conversation Partners, the International Friendship Program, International Speakers Program and Women's Intercultural Book Groups!

**Register Online at [www.gc-cc.org](http://www.gc-cc.org)!**

Questions? Email us at [globalconnections@ip.psu.edu](mailto:globalconnections@ip.psu.edu), call us at 863-3927, or stop by our office in 427 Boucke on Penn State's University Park campus.

*Each friend represents a world in us,  
a world possibly not born until they arrive,  
and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.*

*- Anais Nin*

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*Wishing Peace & Understanding to All!*

*Save the Dates!*

## Mark Your Calendars for the Passport on a Plate: Home Edition Dinners!

Global Connections' biennial culinary trip around the world —

### **Passport on a Plate: Home Edition Dinners**

will be held over four consecutive Saturdays,

**January 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>**

These 15+ dinners will be offered in private homes in and around State College,  
featuring a variety of cuisines from countries all over the globe!

*If you are not on our Passport dinners mailing list, contact us to receive an invitation!*

