

International Student  
& Scholar Services

23/24



**TRAININGS  
& PROGRAMS**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**I ILLINOIS**

# INTRODUCTION FROM OUR DIRECTOR

## **Martin McFarlane**

*Director, International Student and Scholar Services*



Intercultural programming and cross-cultural training are two critical services we continue to be proud of at International Student and Scholar Services, and this publication highlights the work done in these two areas in the 2023-24 academic year. This academic year saw almost 5,000 students and parents attend New International Student Experience events, and a growth in the number of intercultural trainings ISSS was able to offer throughout the year. In total, close to 10,000 faculty, staff, students, scholars, and parents attended an ISSS program or training in 2023-24, demonstrating the clear need and desire for these events from the campus and community.

The Training and Programs branch of ISSS was created as a commitment to the international population of the campus that programming would remain a priority for the office and the university. Regardless of how many resources were needed to be committed to ever changing immigration and visa issues, ISSS would not lose sight of the fact that our students and scholars are here for a fully rounded international educational experience, and that means social and cultural events that enhance both the campus and the student experience. While the programming we do continues to evolve, the ideas we built the branch on remain consistent. Create programs that meet clearly defined goals. No programming for programming's sake; instead, programming that is wanted by our international population. Standardized evaluations and marketing. We continue to uphold those ideas as we try to provide programming that cannot be found elsewhere. Uniquely engaging, uniquely stimulating, uniquely Illinois.

Our cultural and social programming is complemented by a series of intercultural training workshops and sessions that was created from the desire of our wonderful colleagues around campus to learn more about our international population so they could serve them better. ISSS trainings encompass workshops, student and scholar panels, and coaching to build the global skills that lead to more effective and enjoyable intercultural communication. This involves blending intercultural theory and international experience to help our colleagues grow their global competence as they serve our diverse, international populations.

Our Training and Programs initiatives have succeeded in 2023-24 because three different groups of people came together to make it work. Firstly, our Training and Programs leaders Kimberly Yau and Jennifer Park who, along with the ISSS staff, happily and eagerly gave up their evenings and weekends to create the programs you'll see listed in this publication. Secondly, our campus partners who collaborate on so many of these events and enthusiastically promote them. But thirdly, and most importantly, our international population who participate in the programs, assist with our trainings, and tell us what services they want to see from ISSS. This highlights a wonderful aspect of Illinois culture- faculty and staff, students and scholars, all coming together to create something amazing.

Thank you to all of people involved in the trainings, events, and programs highlighted in this publication and we look forward to working with both you and new partners in the coming year!



# NISE

# NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS

International Student and Scholar Services was thrilled to offer orientations and social events during the New International Student Experience in August!

**ILLINI UNION FUN NIGHT**

**AUG 15 | 2500 ATTENDED**

**WELCOME TO THE FAMILY**

**AUG 16 | 1500 ATTENDED**

**CHANCELLOR'S WELCOME  
RECEPTION & RESOURCE FAIR**

**AUG 17 | 800 ATTENDED**

# 1,711

**PRE-ARRIVAL ORIENTATION**

# 675

**FALL UNDERGRAD**

# 419

**FALL GRAD**

# 146

**SPRING**

# 127

**SUMMER**



# TRAINING

This year ISSS continued to grow its training offerings to include Bangladeshi-Indian Names Training and Korean Names Training, in addition to many scheduled, on-demand, and custom intercultural training sessions. These are offered throughout the year to students, as well as faculty and staff engaging in professional development.

## 875

ATTENDEES

## 34

NUMBER OF TRAININGS



# PROGRAMS

**3,333**

TOTAL ATTENDEES

**64**

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS

**3**

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

**2**

DAY TRIPS





## WISCONSIN DELLS SUMMER BREAK TRIP

This past Summer, ISSS took 51 international and domestic students, scholars, and their families to Wisconsin Dells for a two-day adventure in the waterpark capital of the US! We hiked through Devil's Lake State Park, cruised up the Wisconsin River to the Upper Dells, and zipped through endless waterslides. It was the perfect way to spend a couple of hot summer days!



## WOMEN'S WORLD CUP PRE-GAME PARTY

ISSS co-hosted a Women's World Cup Pre-Game Party on Friday, July 21, at the Illini Union in collaboration with the Illini Union and International Education.

## RESEARCH CONNECTION

ISSS partnered with the University Library to host our fifth annual Research Connection event. This informal event allowed students to learn more about the research opportunities available to them on campus. Lightning talks included talks from the Counseling Center, Research Data Services, and the Writing Center!

## SCHOLAR RECEPTION

The University of Illinois hosts visiting scholars from around the world to research, teach, and perform administrative duties, helping to further their careers. ISSS welcomes these scholars each year with a reception and networking event. This year, our guest speaker was Dr. Aline Llamas, who encouraged our 114 attendees to persevere in their research while enjoying their journey at Illinois.

## WEDNESDAY EVENINGS PROGRAMMING

Wednesday evenings throughout the year, ISSS partnered with International Education and the Asian American Cultural Center to host cultural/educational programming. Programs consist of Global Engagement Lounge (GEL) sessions with campus partners who share information with students about a wide range of topics like working in the US, American slang, and healthier eating, just to name a few! iCU (which stands for Now I See What You Mean) Intercultural Dialogue Series are a chance for international students and staff to display their home cultures or a topic that is relevant to their home country. Dinner is included with every Wednesday evening event.





## COCOA WITH PUPS

ISSS partnered with the University of Illinois Police Department and their comfort K-9 unit to host this event that covered important safety topics including how to avoid financial scams, dating safety, safe modes of transportation, and more. All while enjoying hot cocoa and the company of furry friends!

## AMISH TRIP

ISSS hosted our Fall Amish trip on Saturday, September 23. During this trip, we had a guided tour through Amish country, ate lunch in an Amish home, and went shopping at an Amish store! We also toured a large historic family farm in the area to see how their operations worked!



## FALL FUSION

ISSS partnered with Experience CU to take students on a walk to Urbana's Fall Fusion, a fall celebration that included businesses and performances from the area. It was a beautiful day – totally Instagram worthy!

## GLOBAL TALENT SHOW

As part of Homecoming Week, ISSS, International Education, and the Student Alumni Ambassadors hosted a Global Talent Show. Nine acts competed for trophies at Lincoln Hall Theater. Off the Record won first prize for their acapella performance.

## WEATHERING THE WINTER

One of the major concerns of new international students and scholars arriving in Illinois is the cold and snow that comes with Illinois winters. To address this concern, ISSS partners with McKinley Health Center's Special Populations on our annual Weathering the Winter event, which teaches students more about how to care for themselves during the long winter months, all while enjoying free ice skating at the Ice Arena!

**Weathering the Winter**

Friday, October 20  
5-7 pm  
Ice Arena  
406 E Armory Ave

Join us to learn how to best prepare for the winter months and have fun on the ice!

presented by  
McKinley Special Populations & International Student and Scholar Services

free pizza & hot cocoa

free ice skating

McKinley Health Center  
1109 S. Lincoln Avenue  
Urbana, IL 61801  
mckinley@illinois.edu  
(217) 244-2900

Student Affairs  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

The University celebrated International Education Week during the week of November 5, 2023. Events included our signature Travel Around the World cultural fair, Taste of Language virtual workshop, International Cook-Off competition, and Indoor World Cup tournament! Our students and scholars were able to showcase their cultures and languages at each event, helping the campus gain a greater global perspective.



## FALL BREAK TRIP TO LOUISVILLE

Over the Fall Break, ISSS, together with International Education, took over 100 students, scholars and family members to Louisville! Participants toured the Louisville Slugger Museum and Churchill Downs and rounded out the trip watching horse races.

## THANKSGIVING DINNER

Each year, ISSS hosts Thanksgiving Dinner for students who remain on campus during Fall Break. Students enjoy a traditional dinner with turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and more! They also share what they are thankful for and compare Thanksgiving traditions in their own cultures.





## WINTER BREAK PROGRAMMING

Winter Break is a great time to rest and relax on campus! ISSS and International Education held three Winter Break programs featuring cookie decorating, crafts and an exploration of the concept of hygge.

International Student & Scholar Services 

### Spring AMISH TRIP

Join ISSS on a tour of the Amish countryside, learn about the culture and way of life of the Amish people, enjoy lunch in an Amish home, and enjoy a buggy shop tour!



**\$30/PERSON**

**SATURDAY  
APRIL 13 | 9AM-5PM**



Register Here!

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## SUMMER BREAK PROGRAMS 2024

ISSS collaborated with International Education and various campus partners to host Summer Break programs for students who remained on campus this summer. Each Wednesday afternoon, a program was hosted giving participants a chance to take part in a variety of different activities including making friendship bracelets, visiting a local organic farm and learning about the Juneteenth holiday.

## INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT SERIES

Staff members and students learned about language, culture, food and more during the two Intercultural Spotlight programs hosted by students from Indonesia and Cote d'Ivoire.

## AMISH TRIP

ISSS hosted our Spring Amish trip on Saturday, April 13. During this trip, we had a guided tour through Amish country, ate lunch in an Amish home, and went shopping at an Amish store! We also toured a buggy shop!

## SPRING BREAK MOVIE PROGRAM – TASTE OF GHIBLI

Students and scholars who stayed on campus during the Spring Break had the opportunity to spend an afternoon watching the Studio Ghibli film “Kiki’s Delivery Service” while enjoying lunch and the iconic chocolate cake featured in the movie!



## SPRING BREAK TRIP TO NASHVILLE

ISSS and International Education led a group of 52 students, scholars and family members on a trip to Nashville, Tennessee during the Spring Break! Participants toured Madame Toussad's Wax Museum, enjoyed live music on Broadway, recorded a song at the Historic RCA Studio B and visited the Country Music Hall of Fame.



# STAFF

**Martin McFarlane**, *Director*

## STUDENT BRANCH

**Stephanie Dvorachek**

*Associate Director*

**Jennifer Park**

*Assistant Director*

**Scarlette Martinez**

*Assistant Director*

**Elizabeth Sheppard**

*Assistant Director*

**Geetha Sivaguru**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Caitlin Kaparaz**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Timothy Roth**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Briana Singleton**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Karen Acton**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Beth Anne Clayton**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Erin Nubel**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Mary Nachtrieb**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

**Tiarra Beaver**

*International Student Advising Specialist*

## SCHOLAR BRANCH

**Cheryl Hinkel**

*Associate Director*

**Kara Carpenter**

*Assistant Director*

**Holly Bullamore**

*International Scholar Advising Specialist*

**Karen Fenton**

*International Scholar Advising Specialist*

**Melissa Duong**

*International Scholar Advising Specialist*

**Heidi Wiersema**

*Office Support Specialist*

## OPERATIONS BRANCH

**Afroza Faruque**

*Associate Director*

**Denise Benton**

*International Data Coordinator*

## TRAINING & PROGRAMS BRANCH

**Kathryn Burden**

*Associate Director*

**Olivia Park**

*International Training and Programming Specialist*



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