

2023



TRAININGS & ACTIVITIES REPORT



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT & SCHOLAR SERVICES

INTRODUCTION FROM OUR DIRECTOR

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 2022-23 academic year. This academic year saw us continue to return many of our programs back to in-person, and in last year's introduction to this report I stated that "we plan to regrow our in-person events to pre-pandemic numbers in the coming year."

As it turned out, we didn't just reach our pre-pandemic numbers, we massively exceeded them. Over 5,000 faculty, staff, students, and scholars participated in an ISSS program in 2022-23, and almost 900 participated in an ISSS training. The rest of what I write here is rightly overshadowed by those participation numbers that demonstrate the clear need and desire for these events from the campus and community.

The Programming and Training 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





Martin McFarlane
*Director, International Student
and Scholar Services*

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 complimented 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 Programing and Training initiatives have succeeded because three different groups of people come together to make it work. Firstly, our Associate Director for Training and Programs Kimberly Yau and the ISSS staff, who happily and eagerly give up 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 the record numbers of people involved in the training, events and programs highlighted in this publication and we look forward to working with both you and new partners in the coming year!



NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS

ISSS was thrilled to return to hosting in-person social events this year during the New International Student Experience in August. These social events supplemented orientations, allowing students to meet new friends!

- CRCE Open House.....8/16
- Illini Union Fun Night.....8/17
- Chancellor's Welcome Reception8/18
- Friday Night Live.....8/19

1,900+

TOTAL ATTENDANCE

1,495

PRE-ARRIVAL ORIENTATION

597

FALL GRAD

532

FALL UNDERGRAD

131

SUMMER

97

SPRING

TRAINING

|||||

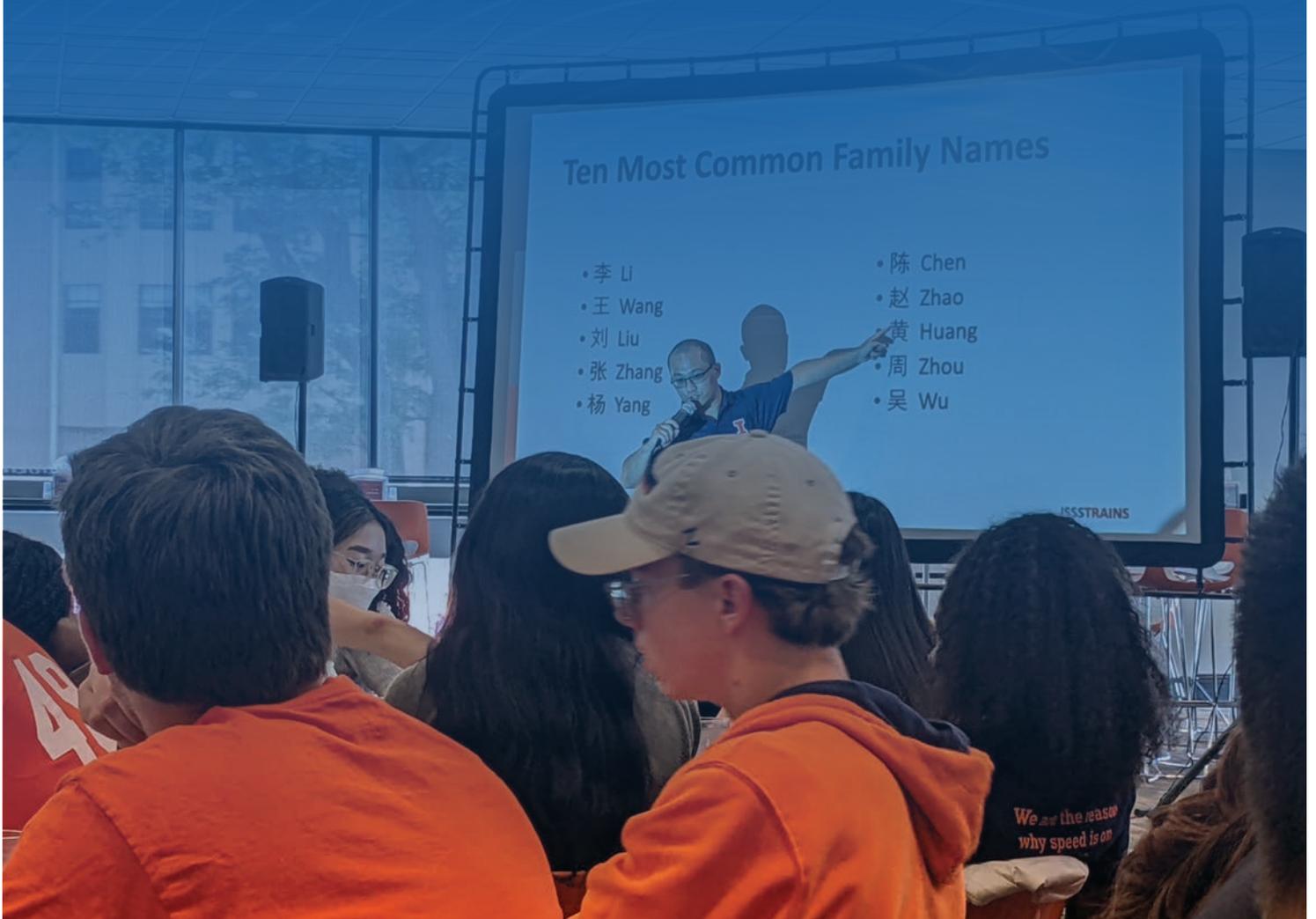
This year ISSS Trains grew its training offerings to include Turkish and Persian Names Trainings as well as a new module on Understanding Cultural Development. Training was offered to students, faculty, and staff. ISSS also conducted custom training sessions for departments requesting professional development.

894

ATTENDEES

27

NUMBER OF TRAININGS



5,492

TOTAL ATTENDEES

49

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS

4

DAY TRIPS

2

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

PROCG



RAMS



CLINTON LAKE

We kicked off the new year with a Summer day trip to Clinton Lake. A total of 22 students and 4 staff spent the day hiking, kayaking, swimming, and soaking up the sun.



WEDNESDAY EVENING PROGRAMMING

Every Wednesday evening, ISSS partners 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.



INTERNATIONAL DINNER AT THE YMCA

ISSS cohosted an International Dinner with the University YMCA in September. Local businesses catered dinner, and students participated in performances and made dessert! The weather was lovely – perfect for eating outside!



AMISH TRIP

ISSS hosted our Fall Amish trip on Saturday, September 24th. During this trip, we had a guided tour through Amish country, ate lunch in an Amish home, toured an Amish owned business, and went shopping at an Amish store! Our students had a wonderful time and even got an extra bonus of going to our tour guide's home and meeting his horses!

RESEARCH CONNECTION

ISSS partnered with the University Library to host our fourth annual Research Connection event. This informal event allowed students to learn more about the research opportunities available to them on campus. Students enjoyed interacting with University staff and one another!

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. Mohammad Babadoost



GLOBAL TALENT SHOW

As part of Homecoming Week, ISSS and International Education hosted a Global Talent Show. Six acts competed for a packed house at the Spurlock Museum. Yilin Li won first prize for her traditional Chinese dance.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK



The University celebrated International Education Week during the week of October 16th, 2023. Events included our signature Travel Around the World cultural fair, Taste of Language, and our first ever International Cook-Off! Our students and scholars were able to showcase their cultures and languages at each event, helping the campus gain a greater global perspective.



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!

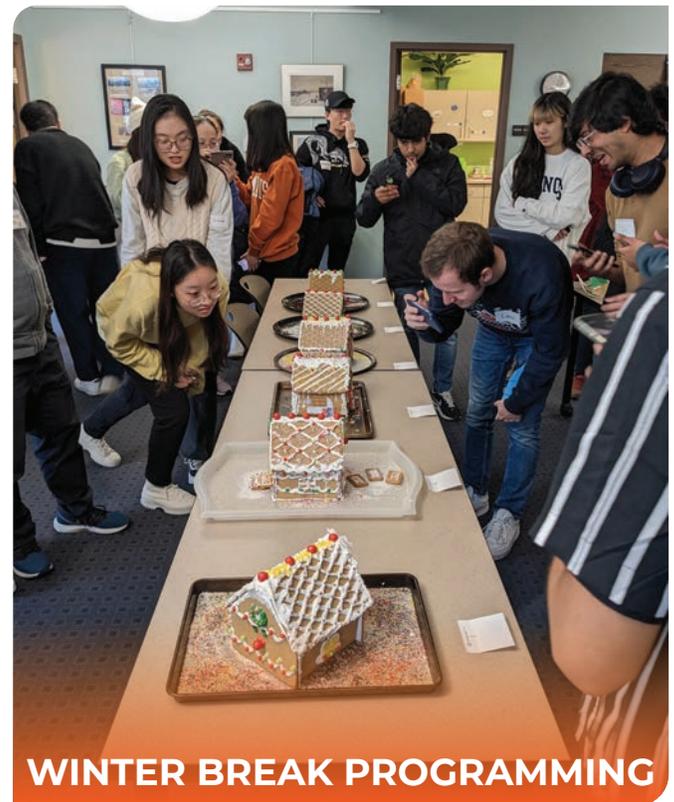


Each year, ISSS hosts Thanksgiving Dinner for students who remain on campus during Fall Break. Students enjoy a traditional dinner with turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and more! They also share what they are thankful for and compare Thanksgiving traditions in their own cultures.



FALL BREAK TRIP TO BRANSON

One of the most memorable events this year was our Fall Break Trip to Branson, MO. 54 students and scholars journeyed to the Ozarks to enjoy some country fun. We visited Dolly Parton's Stampede, Table Rock State Park, and Silver Dollar City. One of our students even participated in a Stampede competition!



WINTER BREAK PROGRAMMING

Winter Break is a great time to rest and relax on campus! ISSS and International Education held two Winter Break programs with a gingerbread decorating competition and a session on finger crochet. We had some very talented participants!

Intercultural Spotlight Series

JAPAN

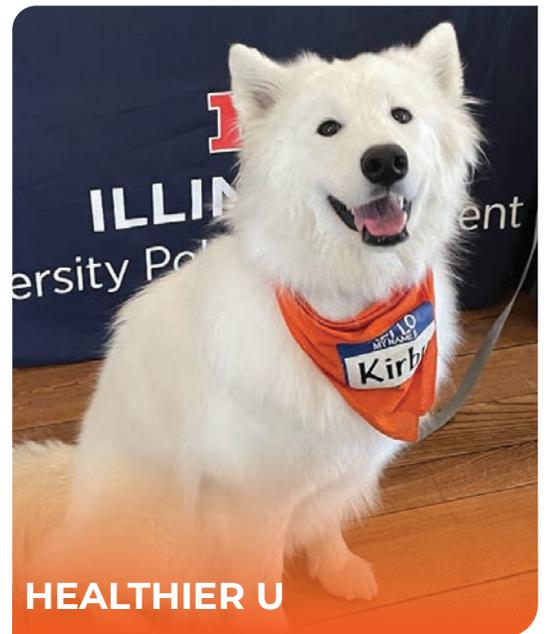
Come learn about life in Japan from Tsubasa Akatsuka, an intern with Global Education and Training! This session will be available both in person and via zoom!

February 8th, 3-4:30 pm

iSchool HUB 4045

INTERCULTURAL SPOTLIGHT SERIES – JAPAN

Many staff members benefitted from our Intercultural Spotlight Series on Japan. An Illinois International intern, Tsubasa Akatsuka, presented on life in Japan and his experience coming to Illinois.



ISSS partnered with several campus units to present Healthier U, spotlighting health related topics and giving students the opportunity to interact with different offices that provide support. Everyone especially enjoyed the appearance of Kirby, one of UIPD's therapy dogs!

SPRING BREAK MEMPHIS TRIP

For Spring Break, ISSS and IE led a group of 53 students, scholars, and their families to Memphis, TN. We visited iconic sights like the National Civil Rights Museum and Graceland. We also ate on Beale Street and enjoyed the animals at the Memphis Zoo!



ST. LOUIS TRIP

We partnered with University Housing and IE on a day trip to St. Louis in April. We were immersed in the local culture as we visited the National Blues Museum and the Missouri State Museum. We also enjoyed a trip to the top of the Gateway Arch!





ST. LOUIS POW WOW

A couple of weeks later, we returned to St. Louis – this time in partnership with the Native American House – for a Pow Wow! Prior to attending the Pow Wow itself, we visited other sites significant to Native culture, such as Cahokia Mounds and the Gateway Arch. Our students enjoyed the Pow Wow and even participated in some of the dances!



FIFA WORLD CUP EVENT

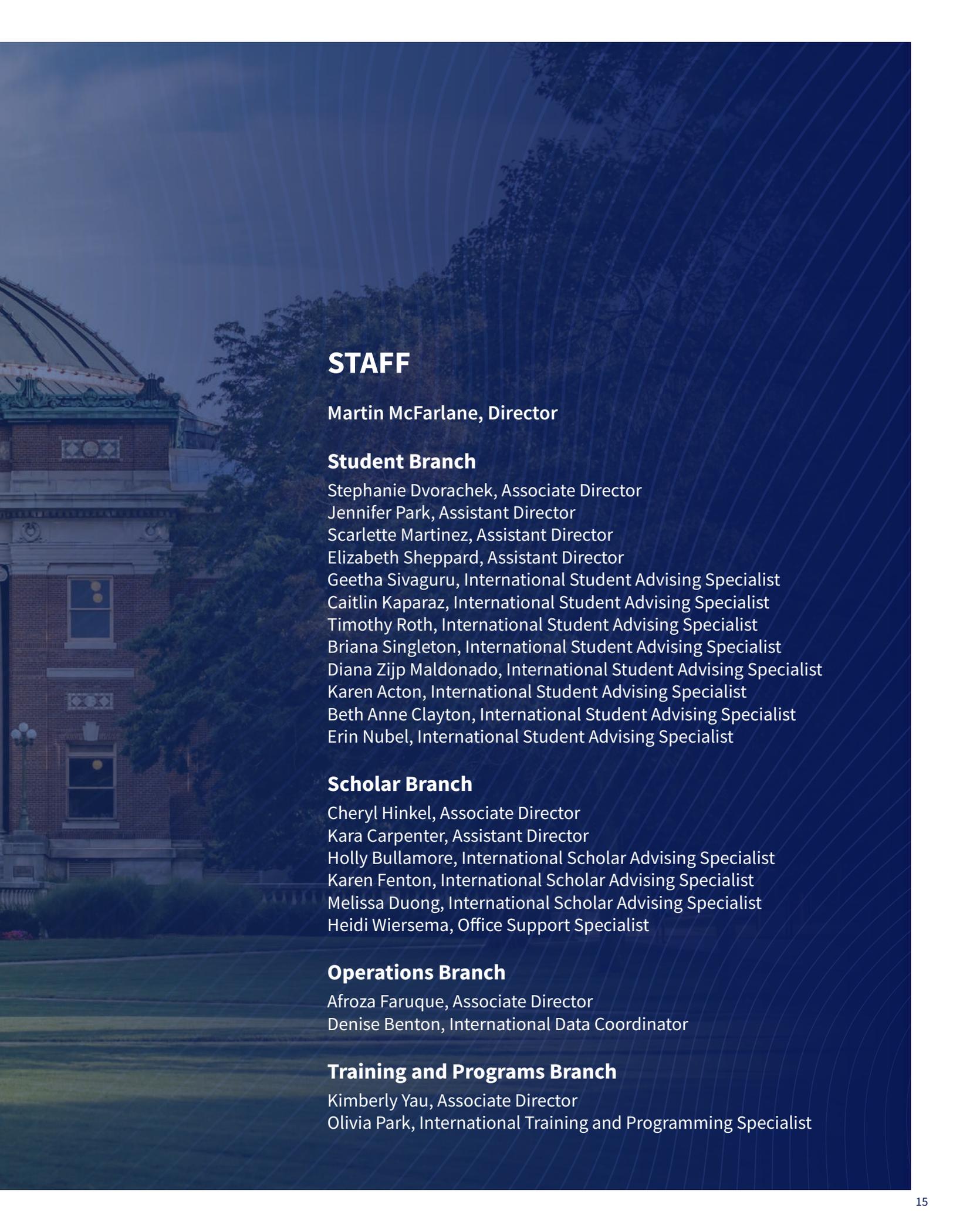
By far, our most well-attended program this year was the World Cup viewing at the Illini Union. Students, scholars, staff, and the community gathered together to watch the Netherlands vs. USA and Argentina vs. Australia games. The first 100 participants received free Panini sticker trading books and a starter pack of stickers, and we hosted a rousing game of trivia between the two matches. The energy in the room that day was electrifying!



SUMMER BREAK PROGRAMS

Throughout the Summer, students and scholars had the opportunity to enjoy Summer Break Programming at the cultural houses. Each Wednesday afternoon, we enjoyed a themed program that allowed participants to interact with one another in fun and creative ways!





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

Diana Zijp Maldonado, International Student Advising Specialist

Karen Acton, International Student Advising Specialist

Beth Anne Clayton, International Student Advising Specialist

Erin Nubel, 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 and Programs Branch

Kimberly Yau, Associate Director

Olivia Park, International Training and Programming Specialist

Connect with
**International Student
and Scholar Services**

Students

432 Turner Student Services Building
610 E. John St. Champaign, IL 61820

**Faculty, Staff & Scholars Operations
Training and Programs**

432 Turner Student Services Building
610 E. John St. Champaign, IL 61820

Website

iss.illinois.edu

Social Media

[instagram.com/ISSIllinois](https://www.instagram.com/ISSIllinois)

[facebook.com/ISSIllinois](https://www.facebook.com/ISSIllinois)

Contact Us

217-333-1303

iss@illinois.edu



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN