

SPRING 2009

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In This Issue of

New ISO Cabinet 2 Cultural Evening

MOSAIC...

New IPOC 3 **Host Family**

4-5 Global Village Tea

Memories 6

7 Recession's Impact Alternative Break

> 8 Slane McCue

AID India 9

Divine Bananas 10-11 Ten Artifacts

Congratulations Graduates!

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Nikoloz Sakvarelidze

Jose Segebre Salazar

Arunabh Singh

Siddharth Srivastava

Hai Tran

Hilmi Ulas

Nan Wang

Buchan Xue



SENIORS: Will you (and your family) join us for dinner on Commencement Weekend-Sunday May 17, from 5:30 – 7:00 in the Marketplace Pavilion? *Reserve Tickets by Friday, May 8th!

Farwell to Language Assistants & Exchange Students!

Maha El Sherif Julia Kulikova **Nadine Volz** Jose Rojas Rojas Laure Berthon

Sara Sanchez Alonso **Hung Goo Guk**

May your road be safe, bright, & filled with success!!

International Student Organization 2009-10

As the new International Student Organization cabinet, we started off our term with the exciting Cultural Evening. It was loved and appreciated by all, making the event a huge success. Working with the previous cabinet, we realized how much work goes into organizing events. Despite this challenge, we were ready to take on our new positions and look forward to an eventful new year.

Our new cabinet members are:

Social Coordinators Wadzanai Motsi (Zimbabwe)

Phyllis Frimpong (Ghana)

Publicity Coordinators Sarah Ghatass (Egypt)

Gretchem Aikens (Mexico/US)

Treasurer Xiaohan Wu (China)

Secretary Charity Porotesano (US Samoa)

Vice President Biva Rajbhandari (India)
President Shivani Santoki (India)



ISO Cabinet Members 2009-10

Currently we are working on a few upcoming events to end this academic year successfully. Through this preparation, we are also learning the value of teamwork and developing our way to power through all the challenges that arise.

One of our main goals is to increase member participation, which we will constantly encourage all of you to do. We are also very open to helping you celebrate your own native festivals. We will be more than happy to advise you with your budget planning/funding, since our objective is to represent all cultures on campus.

We look forward to working with you!

- 950 Cabinet 09-10

Glimpses of ISO Cultural Evening 2009













Page 2 MOSAIC

International Pre-Orientation Committee (IPOC)







Kyle Blair Oregon, USA



Periklis Chatzistavridis Greece



Phyllis Frimpong Ghana



Sarah Packard Texas, USA



Sunanda Vaidheesh India

The 'team' pictured above has been selected to help plan the OISA's *Pre-Orientation Program for International and US Global Nomad Students* - which will be held in August just prior to New Student Orientation. They have been meeting this spring to review past schedules and evaluations - and to brainstorm and plan for fall!

The main goal for our Pre-Orientation program is to establish a 'spring board' - so new students from abroad can establish solid footing *before* they 'jump into' this new adventure as a college student in the USA. Our program is a supplement to, not a replacement for the broader NSO program which welcomes ALL new students to Grinnell. We focus on issues that are unique to international and global nomad students—including regulatory issues, cultural transition support, and familiarity with basic daily routines in a new country!

THANKS to IPOC—for all you do (and will be doing) to accomplish those goals!

Recruiting new Friendship Families... We Need YOU!

We are starting to 'recruit' new host families to match with new international students in August! Current families play a valuable role in helping us recruit new participants. Feel free to send us names and contact information so we can extend an invitation—or, feel free to pass along the web site to friends so they can complete the *Family Participation Form* posted there (it is a PDF form and can be emailed to our office with the 'click' of the mouse!)



www.grinnell.edu/offices/studentaffairs/oiss/services/hostfamilyprogram/

Starting in the fall, all incoming international students will move into their fall housing assignments upon their initial arrival—so if you know families who have been hesitant to participate due to a lack of space or comfort with the 'home stay' option - we hope you will pass this information along.

We welcome friendship families of all shapes and sizes—with regards to race, religion, age, travel experience, family size and structure, or occupation. Our only 'requirement' is that they are open to new and different perspectives and willing and interested in becoming positively engaged in their host student's life! Many students / families find true and lasting friendships. Other relationships are less interactive, but are still helpful when a students 'real' family lives very far away.

For more information or to recommend a friend or colleague, call the OISA at 269-3703.

Page 3 MOSAIC

'Global Village' ... at Grinnell-Newburg High

Submitted by Laura Pineiro '09

On Friday, April 10th, international students from the college headed to Grinnell High School to participate in the annual event 'Global Village'. The school and the college organize this occasion in order to share the diversity of cultures and backgrounds in our midst. College and high school students immersed for two hours in conversations of a global scope and exchanged experiences.

Shy, out-going, interested and less motivated students... they all got to pass by our tables and enter into conversations. From politics to geography, languages, sports, and cinema, we chatted about any aspect of our lives back home that they were interested in discussing. Some students approached us hesitating and nervous to practice their language skills and the knowledge of our culture that they had learnt in class. Others took advantage of this occasion to find out about more specific aspects of our countries where they soon would travel for a summer program or where they have planned to study abroad for their college career.





Daniel Rojas Rojas '10 introduces Costa Rica

The best part of this experience was to find out how much we really can bring into the community of Grinnell by sharing our international experience and background. It was also a great time to get a glimpse of high school life in the U.S. It was a rewarding experience and we all, college and high school students, walked out of school that day knowing that we had discovered something new about our own and someone else's culture!

"I think it's a good opportunity to make a connection between Grinnell College and the high school here. It's important for our students to see other young people from other countries and learn about their "worlds", and it may be interesting for your college students to see our high school & meet some teenagers!"

- Louise Hagen, High School Spanish Instructor "I enjoyed speaking about my culture and heritage as well as getting to know about the culture of others. It felt great to have a role in transferring culture and norms; directly and on a one on one basis, literally across the world. I was glad to be that window!

- Maha El Sherif, Arabic Language Assistant, Egypt

A Global Village: If we could reduce the world's population to a village of 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, the demographics would look something like this:

60 Asians, 14 Africans, 12 Europeans, 8 Latin Americans, 5 from the USA & Canada, & 1 from the South Pacific

51 would be male, 49 would be female ~ 82 would be non-white; 18 white

67 would be non-Christian; 33 would be Christian ~ 80 would live in substandard housing

89% would be heterosexual, 11% homosexual ~ 67 would be unable to read

50 would be malnourished and 1 dying of starvation ~ 33 would be without access to a safe water supply

39 would lack access to improved sanitation ~ 7 people would have access to the Internet

24 would not have electricity (and of the 76 that do have electricity, most would only use it for light at night.)

1 would have a college education ~ 1 would have HIV



5 would control 32% of the entire world's wealth; all 5 would be US citizens 33 would receive and attempting to live on 3% of the income of "the village"

Based on the STATE OF THE VILLAGE REPORT by Donella H. Meadows, as "Who lives in the Global Village?" - 2005 update.

Page 4 MOSAIC

DRINK (tea) to your HEALTH! Submitted by MQ Park '10







Karen Edwards and Yiyun Zhang enjoying their tea

On February 17, the OISA collaborated with ISO to participate in Grinnell's first annual "Health & Wellness Fair." Our booth featured the health benefits of TEA—with an 'international' twist... Five students assisted with the event: Shivani Santoki '11, Nabila Mirza '11, Cheng Luo '12, Biva Rajbhandari '12, and Minkyu Park '10. In addition, Yiyun Zhang, a visiting Chinese instructor from Nanjing University also got involved.

We prepared and served five types of beverages: Masala Chai, Honey tea with lemon & ginger, Longjing (green) tea, Oolong tea, and Ginseng tea. The event was a success, appealing to many students and faculty members! (We ran out of CUPS before we ran out of TEA! — as we served over 170 cups of tea.)

We hope to **be involved again next year** and would appreciate **any volunteers** to offer a helping hand (or cup).



<u>Ginseng</u> has been known as a "cure-all" herb. Ginseng is grown in many regions today, primarily in Korea and China where it originated. Its well-known benefits include **increased immunity**, **reduced risks of cancer**, **improved circulation**, and **relaxation of lungs and muscles**.



<u>Oolong tea</u> is well-loved in East Asian countries as well as by those who simply enjoy the mild and delicate taste of the oolong leaves. The tea is known to **help prevent obesity**, **enhance fat metabolism**, and **reduce the chances of contracting skin anomalies**.



<u>Chai</u> from the Indian subcontinent is a spiced milk tea that has become increasingly popular throughout the world. Indian Chai warms the body, relaxes the state of mind, acts as a natural digestive aid, and gives one a wonderful sense of well-being.



The <u>honey ginger tea</u> is a popular beverage in Bangladesh and is well-known as a famous herbal remedy for various sicknesses. The combination of the two **soothe colds**, **sore throats**, **fever**, **coughs**, **nausea**, **vomiting**, **diarrhea**, **cholera**, **asthma**, **headaches**, **and even anorexia**.



Longjing Tea, meaning Dragon Well in Chinese, is one of the Ten Great Chinese Teas, from Hangzhou, China. The tea contains Vitamin amino acids, and has a concentration of catechin, which can reduce the risk of four of the major health problems: stroke. heart failure, cancer, and diabetes.

Page 5 MOSAIC







(Up) Making pupusas in Spanish House (Right) A number of local children, including Jonah and Micah, joined College students for the ISO Culture/Fashion Show.





 $\textit{Perfect weather for some relaxing \& exciting activities} \\ \textit{_from the Holi Festival}$



Over Spring Break, students visited the home of Jon & Karen Edwards to write post-cards to new international students—already class of 2013!



Olivia Birwari '12, Sarah Ghattass '12, and Maha El Sherif representing Egypt and Iraq with their traditional clothes in Global Village-Grinnell Newburg HS



Sokthearin Than '10, Ying Yu '11, and Buchan Xue '09 enjoying the long-awaited spring weather—the winter was way too long, wasn't it?



The 2009 Iowa Fellows holding their certificates (from the left: Liyan Chen, Xiaohan Wu, Jifeng Wei, Wadzanai Motsi, Periklis Chatzistavridis)

Please submit photos of you & your friends to [parkmink] for the next OISA Newsletter.

Share your memories!

Page 6 MOSAIC

The Recession's Impact on Republic of Korea

Submitted by MQ Park '10

South Korea is currently battling its worst economic downturn since the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. One reason the global recession has had such a deep impact on the Korean economy is that it is one of the most liquid emerging markets with few or no restrictions on investment repatriation. This condition can serve as an incentive to investment during an economic boom, however, in times of economic crisis, this unmediated policy can lead to large investment outflows. For example, in 2008, foreign investors have "freely" sold \$30 billion worth of Korean stocks, significantly slowing the nation's infrastructural development.

Along with the large drop in foreign investment, the Korean won plummeted. Investors' demand for the won fell as shareholders found other nations, like Japan and China, to be safer places to invest. Unfortunately, with a weaker won, Korean students abroad are facing extreme financial difficulties. Parents have less purchasing power, as the *relative* (as well as absolute) price for foreign tuition has increased. Some Korean students in the US have decided to take a break in their studies, or even postpone them to serve in the army (as is mandatory for all Korean male citizens).

Another and less dire consequence is that foreigners are finding it more affordable to visit Korea. This spring break, when I went back to Korea, I noticed that Japanese adolescents now fill the streets of Korean shopping districts. With the drop in the won (and a relative rise in yen), Japanese travelers can buy more in Korea than ever before. Shopping centers have changed their behavior to suit the increased demand by hiring more Japanese speaking clerks. As taxes can be redeemed for foreigners, they have found it very appealing to spend as a result of the relatively cheaper won.

But, despite this increase in tourist spending, it will take some time for Korea to recover. Investment must return to drive the economy. Analysts are expecting the economy to rebound in 2010, and hopefully it will.

Alt Break Experience—In St. Paul, Minneapolis

Submitted by Inyeol Yoo '10



Grinnellians at the St. Louis Gateway Arch in a museum

Spring break can result in two completely different outcomes—a complete lie to yourself that you'll be productive finishing all your assignments (while napping on your sofa) or an actual time commitment to an Alternative Break program! This time of the year is too short for me to fly back home (South Korea) - but too long for me to just sit around and waste my time! After all, as an international student, I wished to expand the scope of my view of America – and so I signed up for this great opportunity.

My Alt break experience was <u>awesome</u>! I was so thrilled to visit St. Louis, Missouri. During the trip I was amazed to see so many different people coming from diverse backgrounds working together towards a common goal: the improvement of society.

We volunteered at several different places, including the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry, the Red Cross, the St. Louis Crisis Nursery, and the St. Louis Area Food Bank. Apart from the sheer excitement of visiting somewhere new, I also learned various lessons throughout this experience. Alt Break was not just about stocking and sorting canned food, taking 12 kids to a zoo, and cleaning rooms. Of course, I had plenty of opportunities to do other interactive activities as well. We had the chance to visit the famous St. Louis Gateway Arch and the city art museum. I truly enjoyed visiting "The Loop." It had everything you could possibly imagine—a movie theater, a wide selection of restaurants, various shops (books, clothes, furniture, news, tattoo, cigarettes...etc), art galleries, a farmer's market, a laundromat, the Walk of Fame, and of course, people – lots and lots of people. I also learned that a number of Grinnell alumni live within the area of St. Louis!

So this was my Alt break experience – something you need to experience for yourself... How was your spring break?

Page 7 MOSAIC

Student "Host" Baby

Submitted by Aanchal Gulati '12 and Ahsan Rahim '11 upon the birth of their new host sibling...

Cautiously lifting Slane in the air, we realize how soft and vulnerable her



Slane, daughter of Sarah and Dan McCue, upon birth

head is. Slane Augusta McCue, our host sister, is a healthy baby, and she was born at 8lbs 14 oz on a Monday morning. She has very small fingers, apparently likes crying, and craves for milk within minutes of being breastfed by her mother. For she is so delicate, extra care is a must.

"Dan, when are you going to shave Slane's head?" Ahsan asked. "When the hair is long enough" replied Dan. "But aren't you supposed to shave the baby's hair soon after birth?"

Dan had never heard of this before, and this remark incited a conversation about cultural differences regarding infant upbringing. As we compared stories about how babies are raised in the US and in the Indian subcontinent, we realized a number of differences. Ahsan was named by



Ahsan and Aanchal, with their new host-sister Slane, daughter of Dan and Sara McCue

his grandfather, who came up with the name after looking through the Quran and selecting a name he liked: Ahsan, which means "the best" in Arabic. Aanchal, a symbol for maternal protection, was named by her mother after consultations with a pundit. In the US, however, it seemed that parents exclusively name their babies.

As the conversation progressed, Aanchal revealed that she had her head shaved when she was six years old, and was still embarrassed by the pictures her family kept of her. Specifically, she still remembered feeling awkward being a hairless six year old girl for a few months, since her haircut resembled those of other male friends. Surprisingly, the level of parents' involvement in children's upbringing differed from the US and the Indian subcontinent. As is usual in India, Aanchal was brought up completely by her mother, since most Indian women do not work. Similarly, Ahsan's



Congratulations to host AND real parents, Sarah and Dan McCue!

mother took an extended leave from her job for one year to look after him. In the US, however, housewives seem less common. Hence it is usually expected that the mother will take care of the child in the first few weeks, but afterwards the mother will return to her job, and the child will spend the early part of his/her day at daycare centers. Sara—our host mom—too, will return to her job soon, and will not be able to spend as much time with her baby as would an ordinary Indian woman. On the other hand, the father seemed to be more involved in the early stages of infancy than what we had thought. While the mother is primarily responsible for the child in India, here, the father is just as responsible as the mother. In fact, Dan is getting a longer leave than Sara to take care of Slane!

Page 8 MOSAIC

AID-India Is Looking for Volunteers (this Summer!)

Submitted by Kirsten Anderson '00, AIF Service Corps Fellow at AID India Chennai

Still looking for something to do this summer? Are you from India or want to spend the summer in India? The Eureka Child education initiative of AID India in Chennai (http://www.eurekachild.org) is looking for volunteers to help with their new English Reading program 'Ready to Read'.



If you have ever struggled with learning a 2nd or 3rd language, you'll be sympathetic to the situation of millions of children in Tamil Nadu, India. The majority of children from disadvantaged backgrounds attend Tamil medium schools, where English is a subject taught a few times a week. This results in a linguistic gap when students enter higher education, which is predominately English-medium. Recently, the state of Tamil Nadu has put an increased focus on English education, aimed at narrowing the bilingual gap, but resources are limited and teachers often lack fluency in English. The mission of AID India is to ensure quality education for EVERY child across Tamil Nadu. As an AIF Fellow this year, I have been developing a reading program aimed to provide primary-age government school students tools to learn to read through a time-bound English phonics module.

Summer volunteer opportunities and projects will largely depend on your interests and skills; however, the Ready to Read Project team is looking for people who can:

- -Design Content: creative writing, editing, illustrating, knowledge of Corel Draw
- -Teach classes: assisting teachers with lessons and activities
- -Assist with evaluation and documentation



<Knowledge of Tamil would be a plus, but is not required>

Please email kirsten.a@aidindia.in to discuss volunteer opportunities.

Spring Cleaning?

Remember the OISA Winter Supply Closet!

The OISA is hoping to re-stock our 'winter supply closet' for NEXT winter... so we thought this might be a good time to remind you that we'd love donations! We'll take items in fair—good condition only—and appreciate coats, hats, mittens and scarves.

We will offer these items to international students in the fall, as winter approaches...



Bring your winter gear to the OISA!

Page 9 MOSAIC

They may LOOK like rotten bananas—but they're DIVINE!

Plantains belong to the banana family. They are starchy, low sugar, and need to be cooked before serving—usually fried or baked.

Plantains are used in a variety of flavorful dishes, similar to potato. It is very popular in Western Africa and the Caribbean.

- http://grabemsnacks.com/what-is-a-plantain.html

Fried Plantain (From Phyllis Frimpong '12, Ghana)

Slit the plantain laterally and peel of the skin. Cut it up into small pieces and soak the plantain in a solution of salt and water for approximately 5 minutes. Heat some oil, enough to completely submerge the plantains whilst they fry. Allow the plantains to fry till they turn a good brown. I shouldn't be too difficult to tell its done.

Optional: Sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg to taste.

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in-

*NOTE: it tastes best if the plantains are very ripe. Wal-mart. however, tosses out the plantains tains just as they turn dark! (just when they are at their best). I suggest you buy the plantains about a week before you intend on cooking them. Tie them in a dark polythene bag (or wrap them in newspaper) and put them in a cupboard to get ripe—it takes a couple of days. Don't worry if they look even black and soft, they taste better that way!

Green Banana Porridge / Green Plantain (From Nikeisha Sewell '12, Jamaica)

For this recipe we use green plantains (if you get the ones fresh at Walmart, they are so hard that you can use them this way. Regardless, they should be super hard)

3 Green Plantains ½ cup Half and Half (or Milk) ½ cup Sweetened Condensed Milk

\(\frac{1}{4}\) cup Flour 4 tbsp. Sugar 5 cups Water

Pinch Salt

Wash plantains. Cut off the tips and make an incision along the whole length. Slowly slide your thumb along the incision and remove the skin from the vegetable. Chop the plantains into small pieces and put them in a blender. Add flour and ½ cup water. Blend (chop) for 2 minutes—process until smooth. Bring 4½ cups of water to boil. Slowly add the plantain mixture to the boiling water and stir the pot with a fork constantly for about 3 minutes. Remove lumps. Let the 'porridge' simmer for about 15 minutes and then sweeten and flavor with the remaining ingredients.

Plantain Fritters (From Nikeisha Sewell, Jamaica)

3 Ripe (black) plantains 2 tsp Baking powder

Oil for deep frying *1 tsp of Salt *or* sugar (see variation notes below)

Steam or boil plantains in their skins for about 15 minutes until soft. Cool, then peel. Place in a large bowl and mash well. Set in the refrigerator to chill. Stir the baking powder and salt or sugar (see variations) into the chilled mashed plantains. Form into 1 1/2-inch balls with wet hands, flatten slightly and set on a greased baking sheet or cutting board.

Heat about 1-inch of oil a large pot (or deep fryer to about 365-375°F). Fry the fritters in batches until browned on both sides, about 4-5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and serve hot.

Page 10 MOSAIC

^{*}Use sugar for sweet fritters and serve them as a dessert or snack sprinkled with powdered sugar. Sweet fritters will brown more quickly due to the higher sugar content.

^{**}Use salt for savory fritters and serve them with chutney as a side dish. Add a little minced chile pepper, minced garlic, or minced onion to savory fritters if you like.

Ten Artifacts to help articulate work in the field of International Student Advising...

Submitted by Karen K. Edwards, Office of International Student Affairs

<u>US Flag</u>: Facilitating and advocating for international education is patriotic. As an international student advisor, I experienced the 'fear of foreigners' following 9/11—especially as it played out for our students. The reaction can be (and often has been) to close our doors, but advocates for international education continue to urge for MORE engagement with the world.



There is a <u>Thai Elephant Rubbing</u> above my sofa— a gift from my 2nd grade teacher. Her daughter was in the Peace Corp and through her letters my 2nd grade class in rural Iowa was introduced to Thailand. My mother remembers my announcement that I was going to Thailand! When I did go, 20 years later, she had the rubbing framed. That teacher turned something 'foreign and strange' into something 'real and accessible.' Likewise, international students in Grinnell, Iowa can open new worlds for the people who meet them.

Grinnell enrolls 180 international students from 49 countries. I do not speak all of their languages, I often struggle to pronounce their names, and sometimes I need an **Atlas** (or the BBC web site).

A single thread is easily broken, but the act of weaving them together creates strength and beauty. **Kente Cloth**, from Ghana, represents collaboration. The OISA collaborates with the *C.I.S.* to engage visiting scholars; with *CDO* to incorporate the limitations of F-1 employment regulations into advising and internship policies; with *Res. Life* to consider the unique housing needs of students from far away; and with *Faculty* working with students from diverse educational systems. In the community we collaborate with local families who open their doors to support students and with local schools and social organizations to encourage cultural exchange – from the Stewart Library to the Mayflower.

We work with a lot of students in vulnerable stages of life. Having a **Box of Kleenex** on my desk is an intentional decision – one that opens up my door to individuals who are weary, homesick—students who need to cry. We use LOTS of Kleenex.



Have you ever had a pet <u>Goldfish</u>? When you buy a fish, you bring it home in a plastic bag. The most common mistake is to simply pour the whole bag into the tank – 'here you go, welcome home!' ...that fish won't thrive. Instead, we have been taught to 'float' the plastic bag with the new fish inside—let the water temperature adjust BEFORE you pour the fish into the tank. This is a great analogy for cultural transitions! This concept of 'gradual and intentional acclimation' helps guide my work with students as they enter US culture and encounter college life and Grinnell culture for the first time.

I have lots of <u>Business Cards</u> on my desk. Collaboration with colleagues in the field is an essential part of this work. We interact daily with colleagues at Denison, Kenyon, Reed, Macalester... sharing best practices and providing 'second opinions' – especially with regard to regulatory practices.

<u>PUZZLE</u>: Regulatory issues consume the vast majority of our time and energy in the OISA—we work to match pieces of the 'regulatory puzzle.' We facilitate initial immigration work long before students or scholars set foot in Grinnell. We are responsible for mandatory reporting in the SEVIS system (the federal database holding Student and Exchange Visitor Information) for students and visitors – during their time at Grinnell and for up to two years following their degree completion. We help facilitate Social Security applications; advise on DMV issues; assist with IRS / Tax compliance; adjudicate and process applications for employment authorization options; etc. New questions, rules, procedures and caveats are a daily reality...

<u>College Catalogue</u>: The OISA is part of a larger institutional mission to educate students "for the different professions and for the honorable discharge of the duties of life." OISA has a particular focus, but we are part of a broad team of professionals within Student Affairs and in collaboration with all staff and faculty on campus. We don't work in isolation.

Lots and lots of **Photos**! The best part of my work - as with many professional positions in higher education - is the amazing diversity of students we encounter along the way. Photos help us remember individuals, smiles, struggles, and accomplishments.



Page II MOSAIC



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MOSAIC is posted at: www.grinnell.edu/offices/studentaffairs/oiss

Mosaic art is created by arranging many small pieces of colored glass, stone or other material in a collage. Our newsletter celebrates the beauty of a diverse campus and world, with a particular focus on the unique gifts and perspectives that international and US global nomad students bring to our Mosaic. It is distributed to international students, host families, and various faculty and staff. We welcome your feedback and your contributions.

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