

# MOSAIC

Fall 2012





## Dear Readers,

*I'm entering my senior year now, and feel so privileged to compile a magazine like the MOSAIC! Grinnell has individually changed all our lives, but as I work toward my post-Grinnell life, I have had even more time to contemplate everything that I have gained from the Grinnell experience. This semester seems quite reminiscent of my first semester at Grinnell in Fall 2009, with cold and crazy*

*weather, but I wouldn't change a thing about it! Sitting to work on this edition over Fall Break helped me understand my own Grinnell experience - hopefully this edition of the MOSAIC will be as eye-opening for you!*

*In this issue we have worked with different parts of our campus community, continuing with our focus on the global nature of Grinnell. Stimulating content from faculty, staff, students and alumni can inspire more new and exciting adventures for Grinnellians all over the world! I have thoroughly enjoyed learning through our writer's experiences and our photographer's visions, and I hope you all appreciate their work as much as I do! From visiting daring and restricted countries for a variety of reasons, to analyzing politics and economics and meeting the Vice President, this issue is a compilation of just a few of the many stories that make Grinnellians unique.*

*Grinnellians are never far from the action, especially on the global stage! Please remember to contribute as YOU embark on YOUR new adventures, adding to the diversity of our community.*

*Happy reading!*

**- Naina Chhiber '13  
MOSAIC Editor**

### On the Cover:

This picture features dishes from the ISO Food Bazaar, including currywurst from Germany, and Nigerian jolof rice, chicken and plantains. With the help of the ISO Cabinet, OISA staff, and 86 wonderful student chefs, the evening was a delightful melange of global cuisine and salsa dancers, as host families, students and staff and faculty guests feasted on dishes from around the globe. Celebrity 'heat meters' Joe Bagnoli and Houston Dougharty, joined Chef Scott Turley to sample the dishes and award three outstanding chefs! The Chef's Choice winners will be featured in the Dining Hall later this year!

Photo by Saw Min Maw '16

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Opinions expressed in MOSAIC do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editor, SPARC, OISA or CIS. Stories and photos are presented by volunteer writers, and expressed in an atmosphere of intellectual inquiry, critical thinking, and safe space.

“Where are you from?”

“Saipan.”

“Wait...where?”

*By Doyi Lee '16*

Even before the beginning of the school year, I've encountered quite a few challenges while introducing myself, not only because of my super difficult Asian name, Doyi, but also in regard to my beautiful home country- the island of Saipan. And no, it's not near or a part of Hawaii. Yes, we speak American English as our standard language of daily communication. No, I don't ride donkeys to school. Those are just a few of the answers that I have given to the million bizarre questions I've received about Saipan. Now, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to my home - for your interest and for my ease.

Located in the western Pacific Ocean, Saipan is the capital island (city) of the Northern Marianas Islands (NMI), the largest of the 15 tropical islands of the Marianas archipelago. Most people recognize (if they recognize it at all!) Saipan from World War II, during the Battle of Saipan between the U.S. and the Japanese. Three decades after the war, Saipan became part of U.S. Territory NMI. Different people of various ethnicities live on the island, especially Filipino and Chinese, but the dominant race constitutes the local tribes of the islands known as the Chamorros and Carolinians, who speak both English and their own dialect.

Saipan is simple yet stunning. I dearly love my island. I didn't realize its beauty and significance earlier, but now I fully thank and embrace the fact that I'm an islander. The best part of Saipan is its environment; the skies are always clear and blue, the air is always fresh and salty, and the ocean is always close-by and clean. Summers are hot and humid, but most of all year-long, which I thought was the worst feature about the island, but after coming to Iowa I have begun to appreciate our abundance of warm days even more!

Though Saipan differs from Grinnell in almost all aspects, both still have one thing in common: a sense of a small and rural community. Less than 50,000 people live on the island, and everywhere you look it is green (coconut trees, mango trees, plumeria trees...trees, trees, trees!). Though it lacks malls, public transportation, or basically anything urban, Saipan is still an amazing paradise of its own.

### Five fun facts:

1. The main indigenous language is 'Chamorro', which developed from Spanish.
2. "Hello" is "Hafa Adai" [hafa-day].
3. The highest mountain, Mt. Tapochau, is less than 1600 feet!
4. There are 3 public high schools in Saipan.
5. Saipan has trees that bloom scarlet-red leaves. These "flame trees" (center photo) look like they are on fire!



<<http://www.picresorts-saipan.com>>

# Grinnellians in Ghana

In the spring of 2012, it was announced that the College was interested in supporting on-site engagement of College staff with our Social Justice Prize Winner, James Kofi Annan, and his organization, Challenging Heights. Tilly Woodward, *Curator of Academic and Public Outreach* for Faulconer Gallery, and Caroline Saxton, Administrative Support Assistant in the CRSSJ, were the first staff fellows selected for this volunteer opportunity.



**Caroline** traveled to Ghana in July 2012, where she used her administrative skills to create handbooks and manuals for several CH programs which have assisted with leadership transitions. Caroline reflects on how her experiences in Ghana have challenged and changed her, and what volunteering with Challenging Heights meant to her:

“It’s not about me. It’s not about you. It’s about us, working together, to create something bigger. I’ve discovered that one of the biggest obstacles to overcome in volunteering or working overseas is thinking that it’s about you or that you have all the answers. Part of what has made my fellowship so rewarding was from learning from other people, getting other people’s perspectives, and working with the Challenging Heights staff to make their work easier. The best advice I can give to others wanting to travel, volunteer or work overseas is to open yourself to new experiences, to truly listen, and to acknowledge your own shortcomings. Remember that it’s not about me,

and it’s not about you - it’s about us, working together, to create something bigger.

It’s good to be uncomfortable. Being uncomfortable pushes us to be better, to confront our fears and limitations and move beyond them. My time in Ghana reinforced that I need to continue to be in settings where I am not the majority. This means being an adult in a group of children, a woman at an otherwise all-male gathering, the only white person in a community, a liberal in a conservative town. By pushing outside of my comfort zone, outside of what makes me feel at home and feel good, I grow. And we all need to grow. My three weeks in Ghana reinforced my calling, and what it’s truly about. My calling is about people. Working with people, finding a common ground of understanding, listening rather than speaking: this is my calling. I will probably never make a lot of money, and I’m okay with that. My life will be defined not by my salary or my tax bracket, but by the people I meet, who push me to be better, who challenge my ideas and my comfort zone, and who help me as much or more than I help them. We all have something to give, and we all have room to grow. Thank you, Challenging Heights and Grinnell College, for giving me the opportunity to give and to grow.”



**Tilly’s** fellowship took place in August. She worked with children at Hovde House, the rehabilitation center that Challenging Heights runs for children rescued from child trafficking and child slavery, doing a variety of incredible art projects. Tilly worked with 43 children, ages 3-18, for three and a half weeks. Her fellowship experiences are best expressed with photographs, which appear below and on the opposite page.

*“This is one of the fishing boats on the beach at Winneba. Off camera, kids were doing work, but also what kids do-- cartwheels, dodging in and out of the surf, running about... I wouldn’t have given it a second thought except for having spent the past several weeks with the kids rescued from slavery at Challenging Heights/Hovde House, watching them draw boat after boat after boat .”*





*"I loved working with the children at Challenging Heights' Hovde House! I have never met students so hungry to learn, and so delighted to be able to express themselves.*

*My first project was to establish a communal journal, and this continued throughout my stay. Kids lined up for a turn to do a page, and clustered around to watch their housemates draw, and write dictation and multiplication tables. Writing the alphabet or numbers from 1 – 100 was a highly satisfying activity.*

*It was interesting to see what they chose to draw-- lots of boats: some very large ships, some small boats. Lots of fish, and also some very specific boat engines. The drawings revealed a lot about what kids knew and had experienced: they knew a lot about ships. Their writing focused more on gaining mastery, and looking to the future. "I am happy every day" was a maxim that was frequently repeated."*



*"Bookmaking was a hit, and in fact it went viral— every spare scrap of paper was collected to make more books! I wanted kids to have a special place of their very own to write and draw."*



*"My last day at the shelter, with all the kids, the director, house mothers, teachers, guards and cooks. It was hard to say goodbye!"*

# A New Sound at Grinnell!

## *A conversation with Dr. Tony Perman, Assistant Professor of Music*



### **Tell our readers a little bit about yourself.**

I am from Illinois, and this is my first semester at Grinnell teaching at a liberal arts college. I am an ethnomusicologist, the only one at Grinnell after Roger Vetter retired. I am teaching a class on music in Africa this semester. Most of my classes will be disciplinary and theoretical, covering the musical terrain of the world as well as popular music. My specialty is Africa, and Zimbabwe in particular.

### **How did you end up learning about this instrument - the mbira?**

I was first exposed through my parents, who participated in the Peace Corps in Kenya. I grew up listening to African music, just on my own. I pursued my undergrad degree at Keynon College, but they didn't have an ethnomusicologist department.

I decided to go to London, to SOAS, to pursue my Masters Degree. It was there that I met someone who played the mbira. I joined the ensemble that a group of students had formed, and my interest in African music was further developed.

### **What IS the MBIRA?**

The mbira consists of 22 to 28 metal keys mounted on a hardwood soundboard. It is usually placed inside a large gourd resonator (deze). Mbira music uses a cyclical pattern which includes several intertwined melodies, often with contrasting rhythms.

The instrument is historically a religious and spiritual instrument played by the Shona community and used in spirit possession ceremonies. As a result of writings by journalists and ethnomusicologists, there has been a revival of the instrument in recent times. In the 70s, for example, the Mbira was used as a national symbol in the independence struggle against the white minority. This resulted in the instrument gaining a nationalist cache with a lot of political resonance. It is now popular because foreigners use it. "It has become kind of its own economy" according to Perman.

The instrument is made of calabash, which is used to make sound resonate and thus is the percussion part of the instrument. The mbira is part of the lamellophone family which uses 2 thumbs and the index finger to make the sounds. This is also the reason why the mbira is known as a "thumb piano". The mbira consists of a wooden board with thick gauged metal keys and a steel wire which means that the materials are easy to find but the actual instrument is more complicated to build, just out of the physics that is involved in its development.

**Tony Perman is offering classes on this instrument, the Mbira, here at Grinnell!**

**Visit the *World Music Room* in Bucksbaum, or contact him directly for more information!**



*Roger Vetter & Tony Perman share a Mbira duet during IPOP.*

# !Viva Cuba!

- by *Andrea Conner, Assistant Dean and Director of Residence Life*

In high school, our jazz band director introduced us to Latin jazz and Afro-Cuban music. Directing my trumpet through the Cuban-invented “cha cha cha” rhythm was enough to spark a love affair. My intrigue devolved into a rarely-discussed obsession after learning the trade embargo would keep me from visiting Cuba legally, and I spent the following years dreaming about a visit that I hoped to take within my lifetime. Admittedly, my reading left me with merely a surface understanding about the politics that complicated the Cuba-U.S. relationship ... Che Guevara and Fidel Castro and the Revolution and the communist/socialist society were murky to me.



*A Cuban, with a Cuban...*

In early 2012, the Obama administration loosened regulations slightly and allowed U.S. travel companies the opportunity to tour Cuba under an educational license.

On October 1-8, 2012, I visited Havana with a couple dozen other intrepid explorers via Colette Vacations. Required under our special visa, we engaged in essentially nothing “tourist-y”; instead, three educational activities were expected each day. Jorge Perez, our Cuban national guide (a renaissance man who knew more than his fair share about politics, history, music, art, food, and wine) called these activities “people-to-people”. Our visits to a daycare, nursing home, hospital, organic farm, tobacco farm, and cigar factory helped me understand the day-to-day life of Cubans in Havana. But it was our time spent in walking tours and restaurants and wine cellars and jazz clubs – hanging on Jorge’s every word – that remain the most formative and difficult to describe.

Havana is a city of contradictions: the opulent architecture has gone largely unrepaired for 60 years, the resourceful people describe their conditions as better than they clearly are, the political system affords free universal healthcare, free education, and nearly free rent to each of its citizens but also prohibits many of the freedoms and luxuries I take for granted each day. Raul Castro has started to permit some entrepreneurs to launch their own businesses (with foreign investors of course – they couldn’t afford it on their minimal monthly salary from the state) and, at this writing, rumor has it that Cubans would soon be allowed to leave the country legally and for longer periods of time.

The Cubans that I met were a proud people ... they are self-reliant and spirited and happy in many ways. But all it takes is a look around to realize how beneficial it would be to the people of Havana to end the embargo and open trade with their nearest superpower neighbor, just 90 miles north. The trade embargo prohibited us from spending any money in Cuba; we could bring home only “educational or artistic” materials and my passport shows no record I was ever there. But the images of Cuba are burned into my memory ... I can smell the cigars, taste the rum made from sugar cane, and hear the traditional Cuban music skip across the humid tropical air.

...And I’d go back again in a heartbeat. ❤️



# In the Mountains of Thailand

- By Uzma Daraman '15

*Uzma's experience was possible thanks to the Mae Fah Luang Foundation.*

When I first applied to intern at Mae Fah Luang Foundation Under Royal Patronage (MFLF), I did not know what to expect. I have always wanted to spend my summer doing something productive. My only concern about the internship was that I did not want to just stay in the office, make coffee, and deliver documents. I wanted to go out, be active, and actually “do” something productive. My two month internship with MFLF, up in the mountain of Chiang Rai, Thailand, offered me just what I wanted.

I participated in a program called “MFLF Living University Internship” - along with five other Thais, and seven foreign interns from leading universities around the world. They were from the Fletcher School, Tufts University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Presidio Graduate School, University of Pennsylvania, and California Polytechnic State University, in the USA. In addition, interns came from Flinders University, Australia; University of Glasgow, Scotland; Thammasat University and Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand. (And, of course, Grinnell College, Iowa, USA.)

Mae Fah Luang Foundation is a Thai nonprofit organization that manages several livelihood development projects within Thailand and in other countries in Asia. The Foundation's mission focuses on three main areas: “improving social and economic development; preserving the environment; and supporting local art and culture.” I learned a great deal about Thailand and about livelihood development from these amazing people that I was able to work

with, as well as from hands-on experiences with the villagers.



*Learn by doing...*

The first two weeks, we traveled around North and North Eastern Thailand to visit MFLF domestic outreach projects and learn about Sustainable Alternative Livelihood Development. We talked to local villagers - walked with them, ate with them, and became their home-stay guests. The internship provided me with the opportunity to do many new things, such as transplant rice seedlings, observe hill tribe traditional dance, gather tea leaves, and trek a potential tourist trek. It was fun, adventurous and absolutely active! We had a valuable chance to understand the big picture of the foundation's work, before we started our own project as interns.

The interns worked on two main projects - namely the Communication Project, and the Sustainable Tourism Development Project. The Communication Project aims at improving means of external communications, while the Sustainable Tourism Development Project focuses on starting home-stay business in the Doi Ting area, where I spent most of my time. I was selected to work with the Communication Project. We created a short video clip, composed a case study about the foundation, launched a new Wikipedia page for the foundation, and made a ‘cute’ infographic about Doi Tung Development Project, which turned out to be the first development project by the foundation.



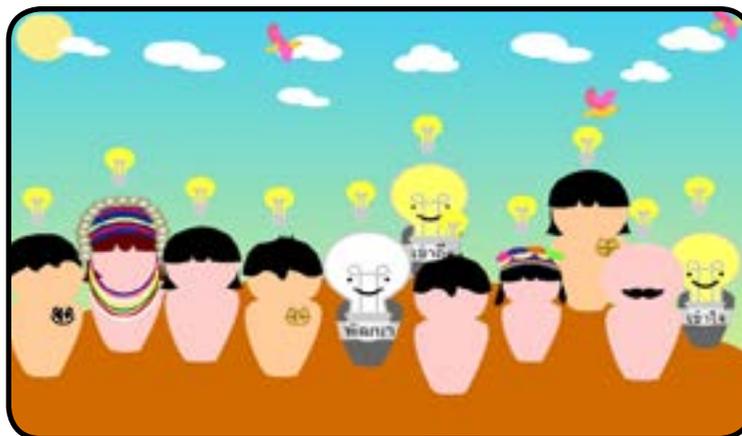
I helped in the creation of an infographic which told the story of Doi Tung, one of the famous tourist attractions of Thailand, which was once barren land. Doi Tung is part of the “Golden Triangle,” the position where the mountains of four different countries overlap: Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. The Golden Triangle (where Denzel Washington went to get heroin in the movie ‘American Gangster’) is one of Asia’s main illicit opium-producing areas. Local people, mainly hill tribes, lived in hunger and in fear of thugs and drug lords. Mr. Moustache, the main character, tells us about how his life has changed since the Foundation came to this area.

I can’t deny that it was difficult being up in the mountain faraway from family and civilization for two months, but it was certainly worth it! I learned so much from this internship, and it has impacted my decision to be an Economics major with a concentration on Global Development. My ‘summer vacation’ was more than I expected it to be. It was such a blast - and a life changing experience! THANK YOU to the Mae Fah Luang Foundation for this amazing opportunity.



**Check out our video:**

**<http://youtu.be/oHFDIxbSUNs>**



## **Social Entrepreneurs of Grinnell (SEG)**

*By Amul Gyawali, '15*

The Social Entrepreneurs of Grinnell (SEG) have been building an international dimension to their locally run organization. Consisting of mainly Grinnell College students, we were recognized for our work in empowering individuals in the local community last year by being invited to the White House. However, looking at the importance of these microloans in lesser developed countries has encouraged us to expand and improve our international branch.

After initially giving international loans through KIVA, we have started to take a more personal approach, dealing directly with international loan recipients, and staying in touch with these recipients throughout the duration of the loan period. As a result, we have now established a network with loan recipients around the world, creating a mutually beneficial relationship. Due to increasing contact with our recipients, it has made it easier for us to understand and empathize with the difficulties that each of these recipients face in their respective countries. Similarly, they are more particular about completing loan payments because of personal contact.

Recent success stories of the SEG international committee include helping start a restaurant, run by single mothers in Nicaragua; founding a community centre with an internet café in Indonesia; and supporting an organization in Romania that includes both microfinance and charity divisions. The successes internationally have inspired us to invest more time and effort into international loans, and we are now looking for other countries where people may be in need of money in order to improve their socio-economic status.

# 50 Yuan That Can Change Lives

*Xiaorong Yin '14 and Tinggong Zhan '14 use their grant from the Davis Projects for Peace, to make an impact in their home country of China*

Our project aimed to introduce the globally recognized concept of microfinance, to rural China. We wanted to explore effective ways to address poverty in China. Our project took place in Yiyuan, an isolated village with extremely limited natural resources and transportation facilities.

We visited Yiyuan County 3 times. Initially, we went to a town called Yuezhuang (there are 13 towns in Yiyuan county), where we thought it would be suitable for our project. However, after chatting with the villagers there, we found that they were self-sufficient. Most of the families were equipped with desktop computers. Some of the families also told us that they put their farmland out for contract, enabling them to go elsewhere for employment but to still earn stable income from their farmland. We were pleased to hear that the villages enjoy comfortable living conditions. If all villagers in China lived like them, there is little necessity for implementing micro-finance projects. Nevertheless, the truth is that compared to other towns in Yiyuan, the place we visited was better off than most.

Later in the trip, we visited another town called Zhongzhuang. This turned out to be a more “suitable” place for our project.

Finding villagers who met the requirements for our project was problematic. However, we fortunately found a field partner who was trusted by the locals and who knew them well. Xinke Agro-technical Service Professional Cooperative was very supportive of our project, and became our liaison with the villagers. We had started this second trip just two weeks after the first one. With the help of the Cooperative, we next visited a village called Shaoyu, which is located near the hilltop - in a nearly inaccessible place, had it not been for our guides who took us there.

The Shaoyu village gave us a different feeling from the villages in Yuezhuang town. Although there are a few villagers who are better off, most of the families had modest homes with little to no furnishing. Although we determined that this was where we would like to implement our project, villagers were distrustful of us and did not believe we

wanted to set up a loan program - so initially we visited villagers and said we were collecting information. Our next step would be to determine if they were really in need of money and had a reasonable plan, after which we returned and introduced the microfinance program to them.

At the end of July, we conducted our third trip, which was a real success. We signed eight contracts with different villagers. They will use the money to build a well, to build a kitchen, to buy a tricycle for agricultural uses, buy fertilizers, etc.

Though Shaoyu is just one small isolated village out of thousands, we realize that it is a typical representative of many poor Chinese villages. Starting from Yiyuan County, we endeavored to conduct the most effective plans, and we have set another goal that one day, our project will be well-recognized, and similar ones will be implemented across China.



*Xiaorong Yin '14 (Center) at the hilltop of Shaoyu Village with two of the villagers who will get loans from our microfinance project.*

## **STEPS IN MICROFINANCE**

1. Borrowers make one feasible project plan and initiate a loan request.
2. A lender picks a project he or she is interested in and makes a loan (we advise lenders donate an affordable amount of 50 Yuan (\$8) every time.)
3. After receiving the complete loan, borrowers start the project immediately. (Borrowers are expected to work closely with us and send progress updates to lenders.)
4. Borrower repays the loan. We will return principle to the lender's account.
5. Lender chooses to use the repayment to fund another project, to donate it to us, or to withdraw it.

50Yuan



# An Iraqi meets Joe Biden

by Samah Shda '15

Vice President Joe Biden made a campaign stop to the Grinnell College campus on September 18, and I had the opportunity to see him!

As someone who was very affected by the conflict and violence that resulted from the war in my country (Iraq), it was surprising to me that the content of his public speech mentioned nothing about the violence that influenced Iraqis, and the number of casualties aside from the American soldiers which he referred to as “fallen angels.”

His speech was very focused and strategic, targeting the domestic American Grinnellians who are potential voters. His speech didn't seem to take into consideration the presence of a sizable international community at Grinnell, who add to the diversity and uniqueness of this college. Several students from abroad stood behind him, on the central podium.

After his speech, Mr Biden proceeded to shake hands, as politicians do... He shook my hand too, along with many other students, staff and faculty. Our encounter was brief, and very unexpected, but I decided to tell him my story.

“I am from Iraq,” I exclaimed.

Without missing a beat, he responded, “I've been to your country seventeen times.”

He offered a consoling hug and asked a slew of questions: “How is your family? Where are they now? Are they safe? Do you live in Baghdad?”

As an international student from Iraq, a country that is greatly affected by American foreign policy, it was difficult to clap every time he mentioned the soldiers serving in Iraq and in Afghanistan and the importance of honoring them in ‘our’ society. However, as a Political Science student, the experience of seeing the U.S. Vice President on the campaign trail was very exciting and informative regarding the process and the techniques used in a U.S. presidential campaign.



## ***Facts about Iraq, that I bet you didn't know...***

1. *Sleeping on the roof: many Iraqis sleep on the roof of the house during summer, because of the hot weather and electricity problems. It's become a tradition that we love and continue to do every summer, even when the electricity is on.*
2. *Palm trees are a national symbol. Almost every house has a garden and at least one date palm tree. Iraq has over 20 million palm trees and over 300 kinds of dates that are used in many national dishes. We love dates!*
3. *Iraqis bake “Kleicha” on holidays, which has dates in it sometimes. It's the most well known pastry, and many households make and distribute it to neighbors (especially during Christmas, for Christians).*
4. *“Bil-urtha” is said a lot in Iraq as a reply to exaggerated compliments about material possessions. The word means: “it's yours to take!”*
5. *“Lala” is what we call our oil lanterns that we use to light up the house when there is no electricity. We do not use it for decoration!*



**Meet Saw Min Maw - photographer extraordinaire! A first year from Myanmar, he is a keen photographer and videographer, so watch for his contributions!**

***How did you choose Grinnell?***

*“After high school, I attended the “Pre-Collegiate Program” in Yangon. The program trains students to become stronger learners, to be qualified to pursue higher education abroad. I was introduced to Grinnell there. Then Jon Edwards visited Yangon to recruit. My college advisor was old friends with Jon, and I was asked to take him around the city while he visited schools. It was a great opportunity for me, a prospeie who could not visit campus in person! I was able to ask Jon all kinds of questions, and I decided to apply to Grinnell under Early Decision. It was a happy December.*”



Photo by Abraham Kohrman '13



***What do you love most about Grinnell?***

*“It is very tranquil and peaceful here. Being at an academically rigorous college, it’s nice to be at a place where you can be focused on your work, and not get distracted too much. When I’m free, I like spending time with the people I’ve become close friends with since I got here, and there’s always stuff happening on campus to go enjoy together.”*



**When did you start photography and become so interested in it?**

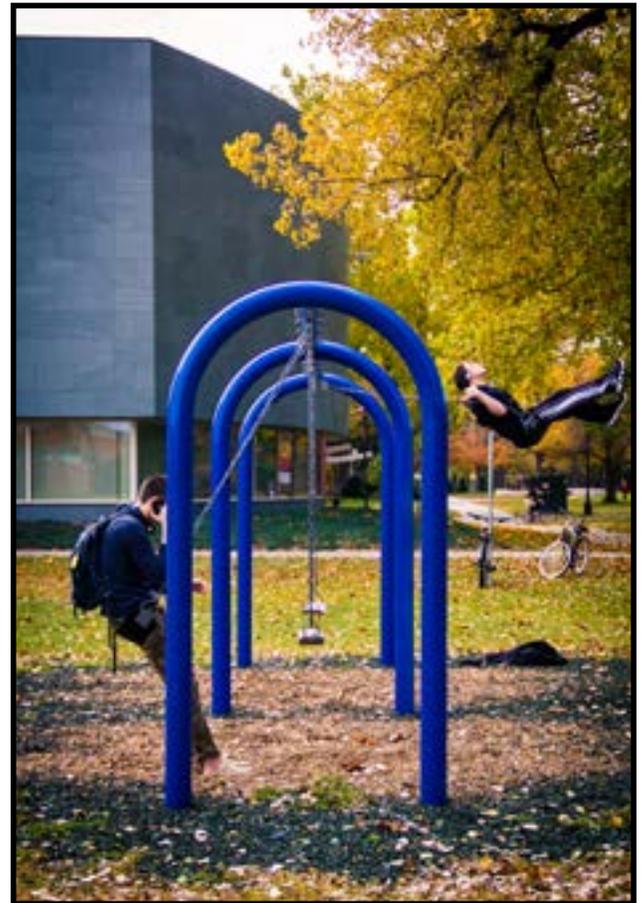
*"I did not own a camera for a long time. I had a few friends back home who were keen-amateur photographers, so we would casually converse about the subject. And when I started working at the media department of a non-profit social enterprise in Yangon, I started learning hands-on about photography/videography. This was when I actually started doing photography both for work and as a hobby."*

**What is your favorite place to photograph?  
(In Grinnell or otherwise)**

*"I enjoy taking pictures most when I'm traveling. Before coming to Grinnell, I traveled a lot and that's when I got most of my best stuff. I try all sorts of photography, but people are my favorite subject to shoot, because you can capture emotions. Right before fall break at Grinnell, I enjoyed just walking around the entire campus with my camera on a nice day because it was very beautiful with all the colorful leaves."*

### **FUN FACTS about MYAMNAR**

- **We have 3 seasons: Very rainy, hot & very hot.**
- **We drive on the right side of the road.**
- **We have the 3rd biggest bell in the world.**
- **We have 136 different ethnic minorities, and a lot of them have their own languages.**
- **It's in Southeast Asia (in case you didn't know).**



*All photos by Saw Min Maw '16*

# Have You Met The Language Assistants?



So, do you remember the LA's from the last years? Maybe... but surely you will remember us! It all started in the year 2012: Alicia from Spain, Elvira from Russia, Mahmod from Jordan, Servane from France, and Sven from Germany, came to experience the American college life... And after one month we can say that it has been just like watching an American movie!

We applied for different programs to develop our teaching skills, and after a while of waiting, Grinnell chose us, because let's face it: We are awesome! We are already proud to be a part of this institution.

We are not only here to educate others about our language and cultures, we also have a social life. We are not only playing foosball every day and winning against everyone who is facing us, but we also participate in team sports, such as zumba and football (we mean soccer). We are watching sitcoms, driving around Iowa (thanks to Hanna Langley for showing us around) and most of all, we are meeting lots of new friends along the way.

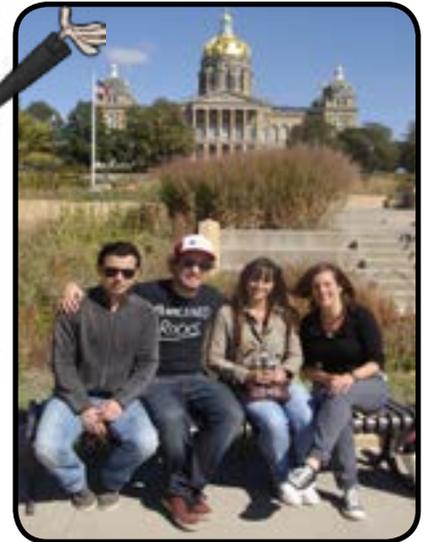
Since we are all from big cities, (*Amman, Kazan, Madrid, Berlin & Rennes*) life in a small college town in Mid-West America has been a bit challenging. First of all, we are busy bees, so during the week we spend a lot of time on campus. It can feel like even on the way to McNally's, we are able to recognize nearly everyone around us! And we've discovered that if we don't know someone, they are still really nice and talk to us regardless of being a stranger...why is everyone so nice here? Weird!

Since we kind of miss city life, we decided to buy a car for weekend trips. The car was very cheap (we hope it will last)! We've used it to 'get away' - to Pella, the Amana Colonies, Des Moines, etc.

Haaaave youuuu met us? No? Then this is the story to let you know that you SHOULD! You can meet us in our office in ARH 221 (hours are posted) or just walk up and say hello! We look forward to getting to know more about you!

While it hasn't been that long, we already want to thank Grinnell for this wonderful experience. After all,

*"once a Grinnellian, always a Grinnellian."*



*Visiting the Iowa State Capitol.*



*Visiting the Amana Colonies!*



*Ice Cream!*



*Foosball in the JRC Gameroom*

# Grinnell Welcomes An Arabic Language Fellow

By: Caleb Elfenbein, Kathy Kamp, Mervat Youssef

For students interested in Arabic, 2012 has been an exciting year. Student demand continues to be strong and the program continues to grow. We are happy to welcome Randa Muhammed, of American University in Cairo. She is our first Arabic Language Fellow. Her arrival has expanded course offerings to include Egyptian Arabic Speaking and has enabled the Department of French and Arabic to offer an extra section of ARB 101 and ARB 102, reducing class size in our core offerings.

We are particularly excited at the opportunity to offer **Egyptian Arabic Speaking**. This course is entirely devoted to Arabic as a spoken language, and prepares Grinnell students for study abroad, especially in Egypt, where we currently have four students studying in Alexandria and Cairo. For Grinnell students returning from study abroad, the Egyptian Arabic course is essential for retaining spoken Arabic skills.

This year also witnessed the arrival of a new Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) from Jordan. The Arabic FLTA serves as a cultural ambassador on campus and works closely with students. In the past years Grinnell College has hosted Fulbright teaching assistants from Tunisia, Oman, and Egypt. FLTAs from different countries are an invaluable resource for Arabic students. FLTAs bring with them diverse perspectives to help develop a rich understanding of Arab cultures and expose students to a variety of dialects. This year the FLTA is Mahmod Alramahi. He is from Amman, Jordan.

Hello! :)  
مرحبا!

With these resources in place, the Arabic program at Grinnell is poised for another great year of teaching and learning. Just this past May, Noah Tetenbaum was the first student to graduate from Grinnell with four years of Arabic training. He is presently on a fifteen-month Fulbright scholarship to study Arabic in Cairo, Egypt. May he be the first of many!



Randa Muhammed

Home: Egypt

Education: The American University in Cairo, M.A. in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language

Favorite Book: Taxi- Revolution 2.0

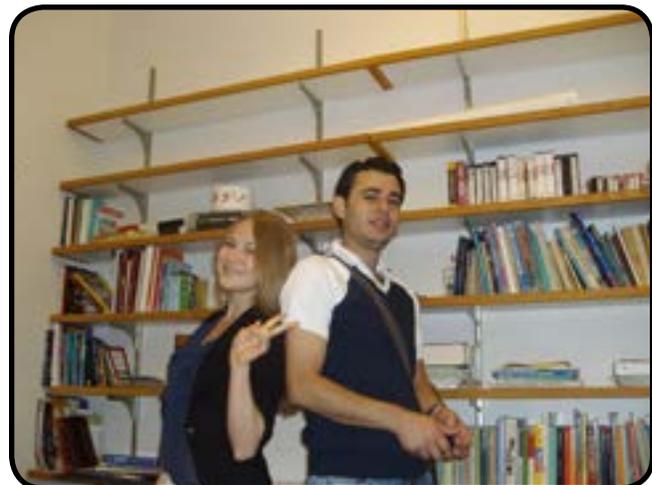
Favorite Movie: Rumors of Love - Basal Eswed

Hobbies: Cycling and Traveling

"My favorite aspect about Grinnell is the welcoming atmosphere, the smiling faces and the close interaction between teachers and students."



At the IPOP Barn Dance!



In ARH 221- The Language Assistant Office

# The Art of Appreciation

by Leah Lucas '14

*Leah's experience was possible thanks to the Randall Fellowship and a Global Development Studies grant.*

Over the summer, I worked in Pachitutul, Guatemala with El Instituto Mesoamericano de Permacultura (IMAP). IMAP works to promote Mesoamerican cultural and biological diversity, food security and sovereignty through community level work in permaculture, environmental education, and the operation of a seed bank.

During my internship living and working with the community of Pachitutul, I worked to secure new farmland for local producers that have been devastated by the widespread flooding from Lake Atitlan in recent years. To help subsidize the increase in costs generated by the new land, I began the non-profit project, Empowering Pachitutul, through which I market their craft products in the U.S. I am continuing to market these products in Grinnell and beyond and will be receiving my second shipment very soon.



*Leah, on site in Guatemala...*

I learned so much through my summer spent with the Mayan people of Pachitutul. These campesinos struggle with the real challenges of poverty, but celebrate their lives with the joy that often accompanies fewer material possessions. My time living and working with this community only reinforced the knowledge that I have gained from working with people living in poverty in recent years. Whether during a research internship in rural villages in India, service work in different parts of the U.S., or internships in D.C. and Guatemala, my thoughts about poverty are fairly straightforward. The vast majority of the world's poor are not poor as a result of their own failures or lack of determination; in fact, they are some of the hardest working people that I have ever met. Instead, they remain poor due to the way that the world system and its members have accepted the status quo that power and money equals status and influence. Land and wealth are then further concentrated into the hands of a few, while many are left with few resources and degraded environments.

This summer made me thankful for few opportunities that many living in Western societies do not stop to appreciate:

- **A roof over my head.** The family that adopted me as one of their own in the village of Pachitutul had one whole room in their house that did not have a roof, so one of their daughters (who was just two years older than me, and became a dear friend) could not sleep with her family, but had to sleep with an extended relative instead.
- **The opportunity to travel.** I had the opportunity to visit Guatemala, and be embraced by its friendly residents - but most of the people that I met there will never have the opportunity to see my country.
- **The opportunity of an elite education.** Grinnell levels the playing field for its students and gives us all an opportunity to succeed. I feel truly empowered by the institution, through its generous fellowships and financial aid and respect for student opinion. I am pursuing an independent major, Poverty and Progress in the Americas, and I appreciate the supportive Grinnell community, with many like-minded, socially-conscious individuals. I find it particularly meaningful to continue my life work to fight hunger, poverty, and injustice through the Oxfam America Club at Grinnell.

My summer work in Guatemala has reinforced my desire to make an impact on a policy level. While I had an indescribably wonderful experience living in Pachitutul and interning at the Instituto Mesoamericano de Permacultura, I still felt very driven to have part in creating change on a systematic level. I was able to fulfill this desire by traveling to conferences focused on national food security and sovereignty with Oxfam America and other area NGOs in Xela and Guatemala City. I realize that in my future work in Latin America, I want to work both at the community level and in national and international policy-making in order to advocate for poverty and hunger-alleviation, sustainable agriculture and fairer terms of trade.

*For more information or to share ideas, please email [oxfam@grinnell.edu](mailto:oxfam@grinnell.edu).*

# Greetings From The Int'l Admission Trail!

*Jon Edwards, Assoc. Director of Admission*

During this fall's recruiting season, Grinnell visited 12 countries, reaching out to students through U.S. education fairs and embassy presentations, small group and solo high school visits, parent/alumni receptions, and individual student interviews. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with parents of current students and their hospitality was greatly appreciated.

On my first trip, I was invited to a Korean barbeque with the 'Grinnell Moms in Seoul' group. These mothers of current Grinnellians gather for lunch every other month - and I was privileged to be their guest of honor. In HaNoi I joined Mai Ahn Bui's '13 parents for a traditional Vietnamese dinner and a night cap at a local jazz club where I got to 'sit in' with the band!

While in India, I had several enjoyable meals with parents of Varun Nayar '14, Naina Chhiber '12, and Gayatri Jayal '11. The Education USA Office in Belgrade, Serbia helped me host a student reception - and three parents of current students and an alum also joined us.

In Thessaloniki, Greece, I stayed with Tasos Papachristoudis' ('13) mother, Georgia. She served an amazing mousaka and took me to visit Pella (the original) on my day off. I even slept in Tasos' childhood bedroom!

During my 50 days of fall travel, I met hundreds of prospective students. There will certainly be many excellent and deserving international applicants to Grinnell this year!



*Grinnell Mom's Group, Seoul (above)  
Ahn Bui's ('13) parents in HaNoi (right)*



*Georgia '05 (right)  
Tasos' ('13) mom, (below)*



*Gayatri Jalal '11, Delhi*



*Varun Nayar's '15 parents in Delhi (above)  
Serbian parents and Milan Popovich '08, in Belgrade (right)*



# A brief account of the economic state in Greece

*A student perspective, by Anastasios Papachristoudis '13*



During the last decade of the previous century, there was great fluidity in the world wide monetary system. This fluidity was sustained by countries and savings organizations with large cash reserves, which lent money to governments, banks and large public or private companies. It is widely accepted nowadays that financial institutions, led by greed and competition, issued their loans easily while at the same time reducing the terms of the credits they issued.

My country, Greece, has been a member of the European Union since 1980; a member of the European Monetary Union since 1996; and a Euro-using nation since 2001. Greece was allowed easy access in the money market, with low credit. Inside the country, there were many programs of financial development focusing on public infrastructure, such as new large road systems and harbor developments, that would create many new jobs. In the private sector, real estate investments helped create new jobs and led to an increase of the estate prices. Meanwhile, the substantial increase of income in the public and private sector, along with the ease

with which people could obtain new loans, increased the consumption of goods and investments in the non-productive sector - cars, electrical appliances, and general goods that improved the standards of living. At the same time, the designing and new construction of the necessary infrastructure and facilities for the Olympic Games in Athens (2004) created a cost which was disproportional to the income of the nation.

All the above factors, which were briefly explained, along with other features and characteristics of the Greek state and society, created and accumulated toward a high public debt in terms of absolute numbers. Subsequently, for many consecutive years, the annual budgets of Greece were met with a deficit. These deficits had to be repaid and were ended through the process of incurring more loans. The accumulation of these deficits led to the high public debt, increasingly high in the years following the Olympic Games.

The combination of high public debt and deficits in the annual budgets was almost explosive; however, as long as the world economy was still flourishing the situation was in the margin of sustainability, although under extreme pressure and with considerable difficulties. The situation changed in 2008 when the world economy faced its own problems as the bankruptcy of the Lehman Brothers delved the world into economic crisis. Starting that year, the problem of the high debt of the Greek state changed into a debt crisis. The Greek government could no longer cover the needs in cash because no financial institution was willing to loan them money. It is important to note that in 2008, the Greek public debt was more than 200 billion Euros (about 200% of the Greek GDP) and the annual deficit that year was more than 12% of the GDP! The sets of regulations of Eurozone do not allow any country to have an annual deficit larger than 3% of the GDP.

In the national elections that took place in October 2008, the main issue at stake was tackling the economic crisis. The new Prime Minister was elected with promises that he could deal with the problem by promising the people that they would have to make only small sacrifices. However, a few months after he took office, he asked the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to intervene, which worked with the European Central Bank and the Eurozone to help the process of financing the deficit. At the same time, these processes were being applied to plans and programs of economic adjustment and restructuring of the Greek economy. The main plans applied



*Greek flag is frequently waved in front of the Greek Parliament in Athens during protests.*

(and are still applied today) were to decrease wages in the public and private sectors, decrease pensions, decrease public expenditure, decrease public investments, and increase taxes and any kind of contributions to the state. At the same time, they planned a great decrease in the size of the public sector of the country, meaning a decrease in civil workers and offices. The final plan in their agenda is to sell public companies as a means of acquiring an income.

The consequence of all these plans and programs is a decrease in family incomes, and a decrease in the purchasing capabilities of Greek citizens. These two combined have led to a decrease in the profit of the businesses. This profit reduction has caused a decrease in the tax revenues leading to a further increase in the public deficit, in contrast to the initial plan of a reduction.

The economy is now in a recession, with a negative growth rate for 5 consecutive years. Hundreds of thousands of workers have lost their jobs or were forced to retire early. The unemployment rate has reached unprecedented levels reaching 25% of the able population, while the unemployment rate of young people under 30 years of age is a much higher percentage. This economic situation has led thousands of young people to pursue their education and their career plans abroad. Many high school graduates, including myself, have decided to study in educational institutions in other countries, such as Germany, United Kingdom, and the USA. Similarly, a lot of university graduates from Greece are pursuing a career in the countries that are less affected by the crisis. Thousand of engineers, doctors, scientists and other professionals have left the country the last 5 years and established themselves elsewhere.

As a senior at Grinnell (graduating this May) I understand that the situation in Greece is dire. Prospects for a career there, at this time in my life, are challenging. Therefore, I have decided to pursue a career away from my home country and will continue with my education in the U.S. Hopefully, when Greece is able to get out of the economic crisis, in the future, I will return to my home country to start my family and continue my life there.



*One of the demonstrations in front of the Greek parliament about the austere measures that were being voted on during the last few months.*

## 5 Facts ABOUT GREECE *(from Giorgos Mamakoukas)*

1. Approximately 16.5 million tourists visit Greece each year, more than the country's entire population. Tourism constitutes nearly 16% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
2. Greece has more than 2,000 islands, of which approximately 170 are populated.
3. Greek has been spoken for more than 3,000 years, making it one of the oldest languages in Europe.
4. No point in Greece is more than 85 miles (137 kilometers) from water. Greece has about 9,000 miles of coastline, the 10th longest in the world.
5. Greece has more archaeological museums than any other country in the world.

# Off Campus Study Photos!



**This is a photo from Les Calanques, a series of coves that run along the Mediterranean coast in Marseille, France. Les Calanques are a huge source of pride in Marseille - for their (evident) beauty, their history, and their excellent preservation. They are also a hotspot for boating, hiking, swimming, and rock climbing.**

**This picture was taken after a (long) hike to the base of the cliffs, right before a swim in the incredibly clear water!**

*Clare Gunshenan '14 is majoring in French and Biology. She is participating in the American University Center of Provence in Marseille, France program.*

**The courtyard of the American Legation in Tangier, first Historic Landmark outside of the United States, and a symbol of the good relations between the two countries reaching back to 1776.**

*Kathy Anderson '13 is majoring in French. She is participating in AMIDEAST Regional Studies in French in Rabat, Morocco.*





Festival Mil Tambores is celebrated in Valparaíso, Chile, every year. Ensembles from all over Chile come to dance in the streets in the rhythms of thousands of drums. Many people of all ages participate in the activity “cuerpos pintados” [painted bodies], letting artists decorate their bodies on the beach and later joining the other ensembles in dancing.

*Radka Slamova '13 is majoring in Psychology. She is participating in the Council on International Educational Exchange: Valparaiso, Chile.*



Diana Roman '14 (Sociology major) and Natalie Richardson-Gentil '14 (Political Science/Spanish major) are getting ready for the Real Madrid and Manchester City match outside the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. They are both studying in Madrid, Spain on the Institute for the International Education of Students program.



“The view from our Bruges hostel. We traveled to Bruges, Belgium for our art history class.”

*Eric Mistry '14 is a History major participating in Grinnell-In-London this fall.*





The cueca is Chile's national dance, which was performed on the first day of orientation at the Universidad Católica de Valparaíso for the study abroad students. CIEE organized another show for the program when we visited Rabuco, where this picture was taken.

*Marta Andelson '14 is majoring in Biology and participating in the program called the Council on International Educational Exchange in Valparaíso, Chile.*



Many students studying in Valparaíso visit Mendoza, Argentina and enjoy the bus ride through the Andes to see the breathtaking views!

*Marta Andelson '14*



**Grinnell pioneers standing on the southern tip of Africa.**

*Qimeng Gao '13 is majoring in Biology. These photos are from his semester on a program with the Institute for the International Education of Students in Cape Town, South Africa*



**A visit to the leaning bell tower of Pisa, Italy**

*Na Chainkua (Chainky) Reindorf '14 is majoring in Art and is participating in a program with the Associated Colleges of the Midwest: Florence, Italy.*



**Two quintessential London icons, the Underground symbol and Big Ben.**

*Eric Mistry '14*



**A home stay visit with a local Venda family in Khavambe, HaMakuya, Limpopo, South Africa. I'm pictured here with the local neighborhood children.**

*Qimeng Gao '13*

**Going abroad this Spring?  
Send your great photos to:  
<MOSAIC@grinnell.edu>**



**Cheetah with fresh killed impala. “We woke up 5 in the morning to go on a game drive. It is probably the best thing that you can ever expect in KNP.”**

*Qimeng Gao '13*



**Grinnell-In-London Participants**

*This photo was submitted by Gregory Hinton '14. He is majoring in Political Science and English.*



The Arabic script on the hill reads “Allah (God), Motherland, King” at this beach in Agadir, where the strikingly modern incorporates the principles of faith, king and country.

*Kathy Anderson '13*



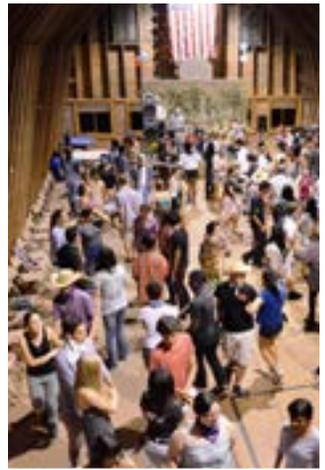
The blues and whitewash and hole-in-the-wall shops of Morocco, at evening time in one of the souks in the old medina of Rabat.

*Kathy Anderson '13*



Mariam Asaad '14 (majoring in English) and her camel friend at the Pyramids in Egypt.

She is studying in the C V Starr Middlebury School in the Middle East: Egypt.



# IPOP '12

*Photos from Abraham Kohrman '13*



## MOSAIC

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Grinnell, Iowa 50112



## A MOSAIC of our Global Grinnell

MOSAIC art is created by arranging many small pieces of colored glass, stone or other material in a collage. Our publication, MOSAIC, celebrates the beauty of a diverse campus and world with a particular focus on the variety of global adventures, here and abroad, that are experienced by Grinnellians.

**MOSAIC is a collaboration of student editors and writers, with financial support from SPARC, the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA), and the Center for International Studies (CIS). MOSAIC is distributed campus wide, and sent to community members who participate in the Host Family Program.**

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