

From the Vice President/Vice Provost of Global Affairs

The Spring 2019 semester has marked a number of milestones and accomplishments for the Office of Global Affairs (OGA). From new international student services and recruitment initiatives to innovative and accessible study abroad programs, OGA has focused on collaborating with our students, faculty and staff, and local community members to generate global impact both on-campus and abroad.



This year, the Intensive English Center (IEC) celebrated its 30th anniversary at Stony Brook. The IEC has been integral in the acculturation and acclimation of thousands of international students hoping to improve their English and move into successful undergraduate and graduate student careers. The China Center also reached an important milestone this April, meeting with over 1,800 newly and conditionally admitted students and family members during an eight city tour of China. The new public Stony Brook University WeChat account launched in February and already has over 1,600 followers!

In an effort spearheaded by community members, OGA, with the assistance of Community Relations, introduced the International Friends and Family program (formerly the Host Family Program). The initiative has been redesigned to better reflect student and community needs, and is now open to all incoming international students. In addition to this, Visa and Immigration Services has been collaborating with the Career Center to improve services to international students looking beyond graduation.

Finally, OGA is proud to congratulate the 10 Stony Brook students who received the prestigious Gilman Scholarship from the Department of State to study abroad this summer and fall, as well as Stony Brook Professor Jason Lewis for receiving the SUNY Chancellor's Grant for Innovative Study Abroad Programs. His faculty-led program [*Winter in Ecuador and the Galapagos: Walking in Darwin's Footsteps*](#) will run in 2020!

Intensive English Center Celebrates 30 Years

The Intensive English Center (IEC) celebrated its 30th anniversary with a special dinner and student performances on November 7, 2018 at the Hilton Garden Inn. Dr. Jun Liu, Vice President for Global Affairs, paid tribute to the success of the



IEC over the years and congratulated the IEC faculty and staff for their dedication.

Photo: IEC Director Efie Spentzos, IEC Founding Director Susan Ansara, and Founding Dean Dr. Frank Myers surrounded by IEC faculty and staff.

The Intensive English Center was established as a year-round program in the fall of 1988, after operating for almost ten years as a summer program called The Summer Institute in American Living. Ms. Susan Ansara, the founder of the program, travelled from New Mexico where she has been living to join the festivities as the guest of honor. Also present was Dr. Frank Myers, Professor of Political Science, who served as the Dean of International Programs at the time the IEC was established.

According to Ms. Efie Spentzos, who has been Director of the IEC since 1992, the program has been a gateway to the American educational system and American culture for thousands of international students. Over the years the IEC has seen many changes to the student body, but the last few years students from Asian countries make up the majority. They usually come with conditional admission to enhance their academic language skills before they matriculate as undergraduate or graduate students at Stony Brook. The IEC will be continuing on its mission of offering quality educational programs to future generations of Seawolves!

China Center Admitted Student Sessions

In April, the China Center and Office of Global Affairs embarked on an eight city tour of China, hosting multiple information sessions for newly and conditionally admitted students to Stony Brook. The information sessions gave both prospective students and their families an introduction to Stony Brook University, as well as an opportunity to ask questions of staff. President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. joined



Vice President/Vice Provost for Global Affairs Jun Liu and China Center staff for the sessions in Beijing and Shanghai where over 600 students and family members were in attendance. During the course of their trip, China Center staff met with over 1,800 attendees from across China.

Photo: President Stanley, Dr. Liu, and China Center staff join newly admitted international students for a photo op at the Stony Brook Information Session in Shanghai, China.

The events received positive feedback from students, families, and guests, with a number of students committing to Stony Brook on the spot and making their tuition deposit with assistance from China Center staff. One of the highlights for prospective students and their families was meeting President Stanley and gaining a better

understanding of Stony Brook University through the information sessions. They were impressed with the commitment of Stony Brook University in engaging their Chinese students through services provided by the China Center.

Students and their families were also excited to learn about the Global Summer Institute (GSI) program, which offers both admitted and conditionally admitted students an opportunity to get a head start on their Stony Brook degree. The students were excited to participate in GSI and eager to start their transition to Stony Brook University and the U.S. education system. Through efforts of the China Center staff, GSI expects to receive a record number of admitted and conditionally admitted students this summer!

For the first time this year, the China Center organized information sessions for juniors and seniors at top-ranked high schools throughout China. The students learned details about Stony Brook's [Gaokao Admission Program](#), which conditionally admits students based on their Gaokao scores without requiring additional English language testing. Stony Brook University established its Gaokao Program in 2018 to provide Chinese students with outstanding academic performance a more convenient way to pursue their undergraduate career in the United States.

International Friends and Family Program



For the upcoming 2019/2020 academic year, newly admitted international students will be able to participate in the [International Friends and Family Program \(IFFP\)](#), formerly called the Host Family Program. This free program creates an opportunity for local neighbor/community members to connect socially with international students.

Photo: IFFP community participant Dave Hensen sightseeing with Stony Brook international students.

The mission of the IFFP is to build meaningful personal relationships that celebrate cultural diversity. Both students and community members can enjoy the enriching experience of a cultural exchange and gain a new perspective about the world. The program is managed through Visa and Immigration Services, a unit within the Office of Global Affairs that serves Stony Brook's international faculty, scholar and student populations regarding immigration documentation and compliance.

Community members and Stony Brook University international students will be paired and connected through email before the start of the semester. It is important to note that this is not a home-stay program. Participation activities can include cooking a meal, exploring the outdoors, attending on-campus events and sharing a holiday.

[Read more](#)

Peer Mentoring Program

In Fall 2018, the Office of Global Affairs (OGA) partnered with Mentor Collective to successfully launch the Peer

Mentoring Program for first-year international students (mentees). A result of the International Student Success Task Force, the program recruited upperclassmen to mentor international students throughout their first year at Stony Brook.

Photo: Peer Mentoring Program participants came together for an OGA-hosted dinner and a game night to learn more about campus resources while winning prizes.



The Peer Mentoring Program has far exceeded initial expectations. A total of 233 mentees were matched with 78 mentors, and together they have logged over 1,200 conversations. Active pairs reported an average of more than 10 conversations since the start of the program, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Mentees have expressed their appreciation of having a peer to connect with who can relate to their situation and can provide accurate advice.

The mentors, who completed a series of in-person and online orientations, were trained on strategies to connect with their students and guide them through topics, including academics, extracurricular activities, campus life, and career goals. Mentors have been particularly effective at encouraging new international students to participate in clubs and campus events, often setting up challenges for their mentees to explore new activities. As they connected with their mentees, mentors reported back to OGA, identifying potential areas for increased University support.

The Peer Mentoring Program will continue in the 2019/20 academic year with modifications based on identified student needs. New initiatives include partnering with the Center for Prevention and Outreach to add sessions on mental health awareness, increasing opportunities for mentor-mentee connections both in-person and online, and following up on student outcomes.

Anhui Teacher Training Group



As a growing number of China-based organizations seek to establish a global footprint, there is an increased need for forward-thinking executives with global mindset and cultural intelligence. The Office of Global Affairs offers a global training program for these executives to strengthen their leadership skills.

Photo: Anhui Teachers Training Group with New York State

Regents Judith Chin and Roger Tilles, Superintendents Paul Casciano and Michael Hynes, and representatives from Stony Brook University's Educational Leadership Program and Office of Global Affairs.

This January, the Office of Global Affairs offered a two-week training program to a delegation of teachers, principals, and provincial government officials from Anhui Province, China, in collaboration with the School of Professional Development's Education Leadership Program.

The delegation was welcomed by New York State Regents Judith Chin and Roger Tilles, as well as the superintendents from the Port Jefferson School and Patchogue-Medford School Districts, Drs. Paul Casciano and Michael Hynes. Regents Chin and Tilles presented an overview of the New York State education system, focusing on primary and secondary education, while Superintendents Casciano and Hynes provided case study examples from their districts.

The event ran through January 21, featuring nine informative workshops and seminars that included participation by many professors and administrators from several local school districts. The program was designed to be an in-depth, cross-cultural teaching and learning opportunity.

Global Affairs Highlights



Reflection on Studying in Jamaica

By Paul Boasiako

Traveling to a new country, exploring a different culture and venturing outside my comfort zone were milestones I never imagined myself accomplishing a few months ago. Why would I want to willingly leave such a beautiful city like New York to go study elsewhere? How could I go a day without a high-speed Wi-Fi network? However, after spending a few weeks in Jamaica, I can honestly say that studying abroad was one of the best decisions I ever made in my life. For the first time in many years, I felt connected back to my old way of life in Ghana and Mother Nature.

My study abroad class was marine biology field-oriented class which focused on studying the Jamaican coral reef, exploring



Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration

The Stony Brook University community celebrated the Year of the Pig on February 9 with the Chinese Lunar New Year celebration presented by the China Center and Confucius Institute at Stony Brook University.

Students, families, and community members of Stony Brook University engaged in activities such as learning to write their names in Chinese calligraphy, learn paper cutting, and donning traditional Chinese outfits.

The formal program began with a welcome from Dr. Jun Liu, Vice President/Vice Provost for Global Affairs at Stony Brook University; Dr. Qun Xie, Chinese Director of the Confucius Institute at Stony Brook University; and Consul Wenhua Wang,

several anthropogenic and natural factors that affect the reef, discovering how the reef the impacts Jamaica on a socio-economic level and tourism sector, and learning the negative effects of invasive species like lionfish on the ecology of the reef. Most of my studies took place on the open Caribbean Sea and wet lab facilities at the University of the West Indies, Jamaica. My classmates and I snorkeled and dove at several locations and depths to explore the different distributions of coral types and marine life. We also had the opportunity to assist in faculty research using transect and extensive statistical methods to explain findings.

[Read more](#)



Building Partnerships in Japan

As part of the Office of Global Affairs' targeted partnership development in strategic countries, Dr. Jun Liu, Vice President/Vice Provost for Global Affairs, traveled to Yokohama, Japan to meet with city officials and local universities and discuss potential areas for collaboration. The connection, made possible by CEWIT Advisory Board Member Masa Maeda, coincides with the City of Yokohama opening a representative office in New York City later this year.

While in Yokohama, Dr. Liu met with five public and private universities to discuss the potential for student and faculty exchanges, as well as with city officials and Mayor Fumiko Hayashi. A prominent former business leader in Japan, Mayor Hayashi was previously named one of the

Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in New York.

This year's Chinese Lunar New Year celebration featured a wide array of performances by student artists as well as community performers. International students from China took the stage to showcase their musical talents by playing a selection of Chinese music using traditional Chinese instruments and singing a popular Cantonese song. The Deka String Quartet, comprised of students from Stony Brook University's Department of Music, performed the well-known Chinese classics, Jasmine, Happy New Year, and Butterfly Lovers.

[Read more](#)



India Strategies Task Force

The India Strategies Task Force launched this fall with the goal of identifying and exploring partnership opportunities with institutions in India. Members represent a cross-section of academic and administrative units with knowledge of India's education sector.

Throughout the spring semester, Task Force members traveled to various cities in India to meet with prominent Indian universities and determine the feasibility for research collaborations, faculty exchanges, and student mobility. Based on these trips, Stony Brook is now moving forward to establish partnerships with universities in Chandigarh and Mangalore.

Most notably, Stony Brook is now working with Panjab University in Chandigarh to

most powerful women in the world by Forbes and is the first female mayor in Yokohama.

Mayor Hayashi will visit Stony Brook in late November to meet with University officials and give a lecture leadership as part of the Global Forum series.

deliver a new [Summer in India](#) faculty-led study abroad program. Focused on sustainability and renewable energy, students will participate in lectures by both Stony Brook and local faculty and experience a one-week learning excursion to the Himalayas!

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