



MOSAIC

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Contents

- 3** **BRASA! Building Bridges**
- 4** **Bolivia: The Colorful And The Unstable**
- 5** **The Chrysanthemum And The Sword**
- 7** **F.I.S. Feature: Lyle & Judy Kuehl**
- 10** **Serbia And The European Union**
- 11** **Mundance Visits Grinnell**
- 12** **Women Talk**
- 13** **Supporting South Asian Community**
- 15** **Where's Home?**
- 16** **FIS Pumpkin Carving**
- 17** **Pastéis (ISO Food Bazaar)**
- 19** **Cranes For Peace**
- 21** **Floods In Chennai**



22	Our Rare Birds
23	Global Grinnell Task Force
25	Perspectives on a
26	Lil' JB
29	Traveling America
31	Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing
32	A Semester In Prague
33	F-1 Status: A Primer For Non-International Students



Editor's Note

Working on MOSAIC for this past year has been incredible. This magazine is a celebration of color, of vibrancy, and of the life that international experiences bring to our community. Experiences that push an individual outside of their comfort zone bring color and spice to our world. The students that journey to this college from all over the globe leave their comfort zone to be here, and thus bring with them the phenomenal energy that characterizes our campus. In coming here, however, these students also push others to step out of their comfort zones -- and that is where the beauty of a mosaic lies. The individual pieces will add their own unique flavor, but it is the picture as a whole that is benefited by them.



I would like to especially thank **Takahiro Omura '17** and **Misha Gelnarova '18** for contributing most of the photographs you see in this publication; and **Han Trinh '18** for designing our magnificent cover that encapsulates perfectly the kind of color the international community brings to Grinnell. Many amazing individuals have helped sharpen this magazine both in a literary and graphical respect, **Sooji Son '18** and **Nana Karayama '18**. And Jon and Karen Edwards, Jaime Chambers, and Brenda Strong who work tirelessly to help offer our international students the platform to flourish and pursue their every ambition. I hope you enjoy browsing this small collection of color and vibrancy, and hope that it inspires you to engage with this amazing community of people even more.

- **Erhaan Ahmad '18**

BRASA! Building Bridges

Desirée dos Santos da Mota '17
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Being a Grinnellian motivated me to become more involved in social activism as I joined multicultural organizations on campus that engage in dialogues on race, gender, and social class. Moreover, it made me increasingly conscious of the excessive social and economic inequality in Brazil, my home country. Brazil has one of the highest inequality levels in the world, which is linked to unequal access of basic human rights as simple yet profound as a proper education. As I was fortunate enough to pursue the privilege of a higher education in the U.S., I felt the moral obligation to make the most of my Grinnell experience and bring it back to Brazil in any way possible. However, I wondered how I could study in the U.S. and at the same time and impact my country in a meaningful and positive way.

Even though I had the will to contribute and to feel connected to Brazil, the geographical limitation of not being physically there deterred me from applying lessons of social activism I learned at Grinnell. Luckily, I was not the only student who felt this way. Just like me, other Brazilian students in the United States felt they also had a debt to the Brazilian society. In 2014, we got our ideas together and created BRASA (Brazilian Student Association), a nonprofit organization committed to change inequality of educational opportunities in Brazil. BRASA provides four fundamental platforms for students abroad or in Brazil. The first one is the Brazilian Student Council on Undergraduate Education, in which Brazilians currently abroad become mentors to high school students, guiding them applying to colleges in the U.S. and consequently helping approved students to make their final decision. We also organize talks and college fairs to encourage students to pursue secondary and higher level education in Brazil or in the United States. The third platform is a series of annual conferences to reinforce ties among our members and between graduate and undergraduate students in Brazil. At this year's BRASA conference, which had more than one hundred attendees, prominent Brazilian leaders in politics, business, cinema, and entrepreneurship gave talks and networked with students, inspiring them to keep pursuing their career goals and positively change our country. From

these conferences, we noticed the lack of summer internships in Brazil, so once students leave the country to study in the United States, it is difficult for them to come back to work in Brazil. Therefore, we created the BRASA Career, a business oriented social network for everyone in the BRASA community. Corporations can also use as a source for finding potential candidates, which aims to decrease the human capital flight. Through BRASA Career, I had the opportunity to participate at the very first "summer job" program in Brazil at AB InBev and PepsiCo.

Being part of BRASA has been a unique and enriching experience, both professionally and personally. It proved to me that international students can make a difference to their countries wherever they are – all we need is drive, commitment, and hard work. To me, the association is more than a community of driven Brazilian students; it is a growing family that makes me feel like home even though I am thousands of miles from there. Today, one year after its founding, BRASA has 900 active members, 49 board members and more than 3,500 likes on social media. Through its presence in over 50 universities in the U.S. and Europe, BRASA is creating a network of engaging individuals who want the best for their home country. Our future goals are to grow not only in membership numbers, but also in the services offered. As it expands to be a startup, BRASA will become an increasingly crucial part of its members' and Brazil's future.



I Bolivia:

The Colorful And The Unstable

Sofia Mendez Subieta, '19
Cochabamba, Bolivia

As I stood in line in Viru Viru International Airport, with an escarapela [a type of badge or ribbon used as a national symbol] on my backpack, and a red-yellow-green flag in my luggage, I knew my perspective of Bolivia would change. I knew the experience of being away from home would help me acquire a better picture of where I come from. Before coming to college, I had never needed to think of myself as particularly Bolivian. But now that I am part of such an international community at Grinnell, this has become an essential component of my identity.

“Bolivia” lies directly below my name in my name tag, and is incorporated as a permanent part of my introduction when meeting fellow students. So it is no surprise then that I found myself reflecting upon my country and its position in the larger context of the world. What I realized, as a more general lesson, is that nothing is completely good or bad.

There are very positive aspects to the Bolivian reality and culture. One of the aspects I am the most proud of is the way Bolivia celebrates diversity. It encourages multiculturalism. As a matter of fact, the name officially changed in 2009 from “Republic of Bolivia” to “Plurinational State of Bolivia” to acknowledge the 38 different ethnicities and 36 different languages in the country. Efforts to preserve cultural heritage and promote such a distinct heterogeneous spirit are also visible in everyday life. Quechua, an indigenous dialect, is part of the elementary and secondary school curriculum. Folkloric dances are taught in scholarly environments at least once a year, for the annual carnival celebration. Activities like these remind me of the colorful and vivid culture of my country.

But, Bolivia has its share of problems, the most obvious one being political instability. Turbu-

lence has accompanied Bolivia’s political history for a number of reasons. I do not fully understand many of them because most of the recent political crisis happened when I was quite young. For instance, in early 2000, the Cochabamba Water Revolt, a conflict that arose from the attempt to privatize the city’s water supply, took place. In 2003, the Gas War, which resulted in over 70 deaths from government bullets, took place. This episode of social disturbance, marked by protests and riots, is particularly important since it resulted in the resignation of the president, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (“Goni”).



It also produced the subsequent rise of power of Evo Morales, Bolivia’s current president. Evo’s presidency symbolizes the belated representation of a populace historically oppressed and exploited—the indigenous people. Composing

more than 62% of the population, the Quechueas, Aymaras, Achiquitanos and Guaranies have been politically silenced and ignored since the birth of the state. This act of returning the voice to the majority is a good aspect about Evo’s presidency. However, the effectiveness of his actual policies and governmental decisions is debatable -- policies that promised to attend the needs of an economically challenged country, yet stand threatened by corruption.

I don’t remember much of these events besides the visibility of political propaganda on the streets and graffiti on the walls. Nonetheless, I am aware of their importance and glad I learned about them in school since they enable me to construct a more complete idea of how my country works.

At the end of the day I am able to see that my country is not perfect. Like most things in life it succeeds in some areas and struggles in others. I love Bolivia and, now that I am away from home, I am able to say, now more than ever, that I am proudly Bolivian.



The Chrysanthemum and the Sword



Mineta Suzuki '17
Tokyo, Japan



“When he writes a book about a country that loves the arts and shows respect for actors and artists and where raising chrysanthemums is an art, it is not necessary to write a second book about how that culture honors the sword and the warrior.”

Just like that, American anthropologist Ruth Benedict starts out her book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, about Japanese traditions and the Japanese

mindset. The subtitle continues: *Patterns of Japanese Culture*. In 1944, Dr. Benedict's research was encouraged by the U.S. Office of War Information, who wished to better understand and predict the behavior of the Japanese during World War II, in reference to a unique series of contradictions in traditional culture. Despite criticism of bias in the research, Benedict's book has become a valuable resource that reveals many features of my country from decades ago. Today, Japan remains a subject for studies, by economists and socio-cultural scientists, who still embrace contradictory, “but also's.” It isn't my intent to pay respect to Benedict, but I have written some of my thoughts on how a Japanese college student (me) sees his homeland, 70 years after the war.

Some of the typical stereotypes that I have encountered about the Japanese are shyness and propriety. Surely, ever since economists began to clamor the scheme of globalization, shyness has been pointed out as an obstacle to international competition, where people speak out more openly. Meanwhile in the dining hall at Grinnell, some of my friends bow to me - possibly out of sincere respect, but probably out of Buzzfeed-inspired humor. And I respond with a quiet, polite bow. These manners and greetings are, in fact, quite comforting. However, recently, many aggressive conversations have been reported to take place on closed social network websites. They lead to bullying and frequent depression (even suicide) of high school and middle school students from Japan. The very ambience that creates the courtesy also dominates our emotions, and when the stress escapes, it can do so in hideous ways.

To digress, but not too much, I like clothes. I read fashion magazines, as well. Unlike Emma Watson, I won't go on to criticize American students wearing flip-flops, because I do that, too!

Rather, I'll say that fashion reflects a lot about public morals. In Japan, many people like to wear figure-flattering attire. Guys dye their hair brown and cut bangs (which can take me hours in front of the mirror). So-called male idols are skinny, and some wear make-up. Many of these images may come across as foreign, to conventional Western concepts of gender. Nevertheless, there's a significant sense of homophobia in Japan. It is no exaggeration to say that homosexuality is a cultural taboo. Several universities have student organizations called “circles” for the LGBTQ communities, but they don't appear on the school website or brochure, for example. Our heteronormative society accepts gay comedians on TV, but not same-sex marriage.

That said, let's face it, the biggest contradiction today is the political one. Known for his economic policies, Prime Minister Abe has Japan on his leash. And that leash looks short and ugly. Namely, his agendas are militarization and—to give credit to my sociology class—capitalism. With his recent “reinterpretation” of war, renouncing Article 9 of our Constitution, Japan is on its way to participate in collective self-defense. For the sake of “proactive contributions to peace,” this allows Japan to deploy forces, even if the country itself is not under attack. So what does the public say? Not much. Despite the infrastructures for demos like the Internet and other techs, people remain way too quiet. Some see such apathy as the result of post-war democracy that spoiled its citizens through peace and economic growth. And its tentacle is about to catch students. The government proposed to investigate the need for Humanities and Social Science departments at university, since they apparently “don't give jobs to students.” It's clearly academic censorship, with their eyes glued on pragmatism and profitability. I can also see their smirk because they just lowered the voting age from 20 to 18. Who has time or knowledge for that, when they are focused on the infamous fiercely competitive entrance exams? It will be too late to decode the contradictory policies when you find yourself drafted on the battlefield.

Japan is a complex country with unique features, like ostentatious politeness and subtle gender stereotypes, and we embrace what we have. Given recent policy changes regarding armed forces and censorship, though, sometimes we should be satisfied with what we do not have. I sincerely wish that Benedict's remark about the sword would remain an analogy; not a prophecy.



Memories From IPOP

Friends of International Students

**An interview with Lyle Kuehl, and in loving memory of Judy.
by Erhaan Ahmad '18, Karachi, Pakistan**

Lyle and Judy Kuehl joined Grinnell College's host family program in the year 2000 when they moved to Grinnell after retirement.

This program is one of a kind, and aims to help international students integrate seamlessly into life in Iowa by connecting them intimately and meaningfully with families in the town of Grinnell. Having a host family not only provides a valuable support system and point of contact in the

city, but also exposes new students to the culture and practices of Grinnell, the Midwest, and America.

The Kuehls graced this unique program with their devotion, love and participation for 14 years, and in this interview Lyle describes how the process works both ways. He describes how FIS not only benefit the students, but also allows host families to experience new cultures and learn about the world.

"Saying goodbye to Judy and Lyle on my last day in Grinnell is a memory I hold very close to my heart. They were standing outside their front door, arms around each other, and waved to me as I rode away on my bike. I remember looking over my shoulder and waving back. Every now and then I think of that image, and how they opened their lives up to us. Always caring and kind, they took a genuine interest in my life, without any judgement. They complemented each other so well - and it was clear that years of experience and companionship made them into the wonderful, mindful couple that they are. I love them as friends and parents, and am so grateful that our paths were able to cross."

- Aaltan Ahmad '14



"Lyle and Judy's kindness and help made my life at Grinnell so wonderful! From the Iowa State Fair to warm Thanksgiving dinners. From birthday cakes to pumpkin carvings. From IPOP to Family Weekends and Commencement... Million thanks to Lyle and Judy, my beloved Grinnell grandparents, for their love and kindness that made Grinnell a true home away from home for me and my host siblings."

- Yining Xu '13

"Lyle and Judy are certainly among the most caring, decent, and kind people that I have ever met. My four years in Grinnell College were very special and precious to me and I am forever grateful to the love and help that Judy and Lyle gave me. Judy and Lyle are loyal servants to God, and Judy shared her love with people around her to influence us even after she has gone to be with God."

"I am grateful to Grinnell for putting me together with Judy and Lyle and letting them become one of my most precious memories of my life. To me, Judy's leaving is the same as a loss in my family. I have nothing but my best love to Lyle and I admire that his faith has helped him to fend off the extreme grief, and keep carrying the love he and Judy had for other people. I am not a Christian, but what I understand is this: After all, what is faith? If it cannot endure during the most tested moment. Judy and Lyle have exemplified the most caring and compassionate people that we could ever be. I will always have them in my heart."

- Jet Liu '15

Why did you become a Host Family?

We moved here to Grinnell in 2000. We were retiring but we didn't want to fully retire, you know...we wanted to stay in touch with all generations. We heard that Grinnell had this program, so we thought we'd check it out. It sounded fun! I am not a traveler, but my wife Judy would go anyplace, any time. This program gave us a way to bring the world to us!

When you started hosting, were there things you were excited, nervous, or worried about?

Yeah, we were a little nervous. At that time, the students stayed with us [in our home] during their first week. We had signed up for one student, but they were running short of hosts, so they called us, "is there any way you could take two?" We said "Yes! We can!" So our first two students were from India, and they stayed with us the first week. We were nervous about that, with only one extra bedroom.

And did that work out alright?

Well, they did have quite different personalities [smile], but the week went along fine! We've learned that each student is special in their own way.

Over the years, did you discover favorite activities to do with your host students?

The birthday parties here [at the Kuehls] were the most fun. That's what I remember most. Judy loved to make birthday cakes. And, you know the care packages? - you can sign up and have them delivered, but we didn't want to do that. We wanted to make our own! That was always fun, and we'd deliver them in person on campus.

Do you have any advice for to current and future host families?

Oh I think, maybe just letting the student be themselves. You know, every one is unique. Let them bring their culture into your home, and introduce you to some of their favorite things. That way you are not giving everything to them, they are also giving back to you.

Is there anything you'd do to improve the program?

I can't think of any way they would improve it. They are doing a great job and have introduced new ideas along the way.

What are your best memories from hosting?

Well yeah! I have some. Our first student from India went home with his roommate, to North-Central, Iowa, over Christmas and they went sledding. He went down a hill on a sled, dropped off of a little ledge and onto a rock, and broke his back! So, his parents came from India, and he was in a body cast so they had to do every-



thing for him. But, until they got here, we took extra special care of him! He was able to graduate in three and a half years, with a double major - he recovered beautifully. That one probably sticks in my mind the most because we spent time with his parents too - we took them grocery shopping and they had us over for two or three meals.

Other pleasant memories? We had lots of them! We took Yining (China) to the State Fair and had a wonderful time. She enjoyed - well I don't know if whether she enjoyed it or not - but she got to sample some of the foods there. Another one of the students learned to drive with my car - I took him out driving and parallel parking! We got him his driver's license here in Grinnell. That was fun, too. And the birthday parties! The birthday parties were - those were the highlights. Just having you all come to our home for meals and parties...

Have you received special gifts or souvenirs?

Well, I like tea from India, and cookies from China. And, do you see the tops of our windows? After Judy died, we had so many - those things you put around your head [scarves] - and she rarely wore them. She never wanted curtains on those windows because she worked in a lower level, in the dark, and she never saw the light. She didn't want curtains, because she loved to see the light! I always thought that it looked so bare without fabric, so one day I was going through the drawer of trinkets and I saw that pile of shawls and thought "Gee wiz! Could I do something with those?" I brought the green one out and thought it looked pretty cool, so I just kept bringing them and bringing them, so they're getting good use now!

Do you know where all those shawls are from?

Oh I wish we would have kept track! They're from different countries. I know some are from Nepal. Now I understand that we're not hosting the students to get the gifts - but they are wonderful, and they are all just little symbols of their home countries.

Have you learned a lot about different cultures?

Oh I have, yes. You know, in some ways we're all alike. We all like hugs, we all have beautiful smiles, and when you get to know somebody on a personal level it really just influences your opinion of the whole country. Yeah [our host children] certainly have enriched our lives. They have added excitement into our retirement, and have enhanced our life in Grinnell.

Did you get to meet the students' parents?

Yes, we have met many who could come for graduation. Jet's parents (China) stayed at our house. We've met Yining's parents, we've met Sarojini's parents, too.

Was there a "learning curve" as you met new students over time?

I wish Judy were here to answer that question! She really was the spark plug for all of this. I was, you know, doing it - but she was the one. You know, for several of them it was difficult for me to understand what they would say [because of my hearing, and their accents]. But Judy could sit down and have a great conversation with every one of them. She would really enjoy it. I wanted to do that too, but it was more difficult for me. ...but the learning curve, I think we just became more relaxed throughout the years, and even though it was fun with the first group, it has been 10 times more fun over time.

Do you have a message for your former host students?

Yes. I love them all. Every one of them. We heard from every single one of them after Judy died. I've kept their messages, and that was so endearing to me - to get a message from every one. That is to me what family is all about.

You know, we love our family so much, too. I have four children, and love them dearly, and I didn't ever want them to think that maybe we liked these students more than they. So we were always kind of conscious of that, and we somehow or other included the rest of our family in our hosting. So the grandkids have also learned a lot through the program. They are in small schools, and they aren't able to travel much, so it can seem confined. So, when you guys [students] come over when the grandkids are here, this shows them that there are friendly and interesting people around the world who care about them as much as they care about each other!

FIS Hosts for fall!

Return hosts are **WELCOME**. In addition please *promote* this opportunity to friends - staff, faculty, & other community members.

- FIS facilitates friendships across **culture**, across **generations**, and across **communities**.
- Participating **students live on campus** - but they get to know our awesome local community by having a friendly connection with **YOU!**
- New matches will be made in August, and hosts & students meet on Tuesday, August 16th.

<http://bit.ly/grinnell-fis>

*Learn more on our web site, and submit your FIS Host Application soon!

Friends of International Students

Serbia and the European Union

Teodora Cakarmis '17, Belgrade, Serbia

If we were to regard the concept of the European Union as an ideology, one that encompasses one's political, social, and moral views, we could say that even in Europe there are quite a few 'non-believers'. They do not outweigh the 'believers', but these dissenting voices are loud and significant. In fact, in the year 2012, judging by the survey conducted by the Eurobarometer which asked EU citizens whether they trusted the Union, the support for the EU hit an all-time low. Although using the word *trust* may seem an ambiguous and confusing way to formulate a survey question, when one thinks about the fact that EU membership requires a member state to freely wave some of its sovereignty on issues ranging from public education to national defense, the wording starts to sound a lot less unreasonable. The survey exposed that only 31% of all EU citizens reported having trust in the European Union, and 46% described themselves as "pessimistic" about EU's future, while 18% outright saw EU membership as a bad thing.

Three years later, after the Greek government debt crisis, the 'threats' of Brexit, and the unsatisfactory and chaotic way in which the EU has dealt with and continues to deal with the migrant crisis, I do not assume the numbers have changed much in its favor. Euroscepticism remains one of the pillar thoughts of the extreme right dogma in Europe; today it is noticeable that the 'non-believers' are getting more zealous and audacious, while the 'believers' feel disappointed, and with good reason.

Yet, I chose to spend this past summer working for the Negotiating Team for the Accession of the Republic of Serbia to the European Union.

Serbia became an official candidate for accession to the EU in 2012; since then the EU Commission has granted it with 800 million euros just in IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) funds that Serbia was able to use in carrying out projects such as reform and development of its administrative infrastructure as well as empowerment of women entrepreneurs coming from impoverished neighborhoods. This is one of the reasons I believe in Serbia's road to the EU. I believe that with the consultative and financial support of the EU, Serbia can undertake necessary reforms in areas such as institution building, cross-border cooperation, regional development, hu-

man resources, and rural development. To elaborate, all candidate states are required to adopt and implement the extensive *acquis communautaire* (the body of the EU law), and the implementation of this body of law will bring about the more-than-needed reform of the whole corpus of Serbian public policy. I, for one, believe that a little fight against corruption never hurt anyone. Furthermore, I believe that due to its geopolitical context, Serbia can only regain its relevance in the international community as a reliable European neighbor. Perhaps most importantly, Serbia has the potential to be the leader in the mission to stabilize the region of the Western Balkans, it has the opportunity to unify the people of ex-Yugoslavia under the commitment of long lasting peace.

During my time on the team, I was able to contribute to both bilateral and multilateral diplomatic meetings. The agendas of these meetings warried, but as Serbia is currently working on its action plans for the Negotiating Chapter 23 (concerned with the judiciary and fundamental rights) most of my work focused around preparation and briefings for meetings and round table events pertaining to treatment of national, ethnic, and religious minorities in Serbia.

Regional cooperation, international dialogue, and the highest possible standard of human rights are all values that I have come to value through my students at Grinnell, and it was an honor to work with the Negotiating Team. After this summer experience, I can say that if the concept of the European Union was an ideology, my "Grinnellianism" would certainly render me a 'believer'.



Mundance at Grinnell

Azwad Ahmed '18, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Mundance, an artist from the UK, performed in Gardner Lounge last fall, with the support of SGA Concerts.



How did your music career? I was originally an events manager so I've always DJ'd and made music in my spare time. I also put on raves. I used to work for a magazine called *Vice* and I was the events manager. I also ran a record label. After they put out a band called Black Lips, they got Diplo to put out a remix. While I was working there, I did a bootleg of his remix, I got MC Jammer on it. I MySpace'd it to Diplo and didn't think anything of it and two days later he got back to me and signed me! I was going around the world with him for three months, which is crazy, and after that I had an initial sort of two-year burst. Then, I kind of just ran out of ideas. I wasn't happy with my music and I didn't like where the scene I was attached to was going, so I took a bit of time out to hone my sound. I felt that I got lucky, essentially, I didn't really expect to come down this route. Suddenly I was thrown in at the deep end, which was good because I was forced to do things I might not normally have done. But I didn't feel like I was good enough as a producer, so I took some time to learn my trade, and then came back to the scene in 2013 with my mixtape, *Twists and Turns*. I got the passion back, and I felt like I was in a bit of a sweet spot so I was making a bunch of music again.

What were your influences growing up? The main influences were UK Happy Hardcore, rave music. I'm from the South Coast of the UK and it's sort of ingrained into our culture. I was big into skating, so my music tastes were shaped by the videos I was watching. They were American videos, so I was big into punk rock, metal, hardcore, and stuff like that. I soaked up everything. I was listening to shoegaze and stuff. In the first wave, the focus was regional music from around the world, so like Caribbean music, Brazilian music, Mexican music, but this next latest wave is more focused on rave, early drummer bass, the sort of inner city feelings of dread – that's the focus.

You have traveled a lot during your career, how has that influenced you? Travel is one of the best things – feed your mind, feed your soul. You can't beat it to open your eyes to different ways of approaching things and just meeting people, talking to people, and seeing their backgrounds and being taught music by them is one of the most eye-opening things that you can do, really, in music. I've been very blessed to do a lot of traveling.

How have Soundcloud and other social media platforms affected your work? I love Soundcloud and it's a shame that it's all going to cave in but I think there's two ways of looking at it. The quality control of music – now everyone can make music and there's a lot out there, so it's my job as a DJ to filter out the subpar stuff. I've listened to a lot of stuff, and it takes a long time to wade through it – but it's good in that it democratized music. Anyone can get a crack at some software and start making music and get an audience, and it isn't prohibitively expensive to start doing it. Social media is cool, though it has a lot of downsides as well, –people throw around opinions you don't really wanna hear. I like Instagram, but Twitter annoys me.

What were some of your favorite shows that you performed in? I played Glastonbury, and that was a highlight. Fabric is also a highlight. Fabric (a nightclub in London) is an institution – I've been going since I was seventeen. Early on, I was asked to have a mix CD series. I'm not sure it's big out here, but in Europe it's iconic. They asked me to do one and I've bought them since when I was young. They have a silver tin with your name on it, and to get a silver tin with my name on it was a really exciting thing, so that was a career highlight for me.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? I want to have my own studio. to produce other people's music. I'd prefer to travel less, and have a bit more 9-5... still touring, but not every weekend. I love working in a studio.

Woman Talk

Anesu Gamanya '17

International Women's Day was a holiday that I'd rarely celebrated until recent years, when I came to understand what it stands for; a time to honor the role and progress of women around the world, despite their gender or sexuality. This year, I worked with the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA) to organize a special event called "Woman Talk." We were supported financially by Gender, Women, & Sexuality Studies (GWSS). Invitations were extended to international sophomore and junior women, and they could bring one U.S. peer, and one woman from the staff, faculty, or FIS host program).

Women's Talk gave me an opportunity to meet and dialogue with women from around the world and across generations, to hear about their experiences, and to reflect on how being a woman has impacted their choices in life. The discussion was particularly special for me because the group included my peers, as well as women in the older generation in different careers. While the participants were from different parts of the world, and different walks and stages of life, there was a commonality in the issues and experiences that we talked about.

At one point, we separated by generation. The students talked about our role models, and shared things that we admired about the women in our lives. Lauren Yi '18 shared that she had been inspired by her grandmother's strength and ability to overcome obstacles. Her grandmother had migrated to the U.S. after defecting from North Korea, and had built a life for herself and her family in a foreign country where she barely knew the language or the customs. This reminded me of how much I admired my grandmother, who was born during colonial times in Zimbabwe, to illiterate parents in the rural areas. She had to work so hard to put herself and her siblings in school, and she tried to ensure that her children and grandchildren would have a better life. This sharing moment reinforced my awareness of how ordinary women around the world are so very tenacious and resilient, despite their circumstances, and work tirelessly to provide a better life for their families.

We also did several discussion activities across the generations. It was valuable to hear advice from the older women in the group. They shared about some of the personal challenges they'd faced, and reflected on some decisions that they regretted from when they were my age. The discussion inspired me to recognize and be grateful for the progress in gender equality that the older generation has fought for, for women's issues. I was also very surprised to hear some of the older women talk about some elements that they especially admire about women in my generation. All in all, I feel this was a great opportunity for women, speaking openly and honestly, to learn from each other about the fact that many of the challenges and joys that we face are not individualistic but are also universal. I feel motivated to lift International Women's Day to higher prominence in the years to come - in my life, and in the lives of the women around me.



Supporting South Asian Community at Grinnell

Radhika Malaviya '18
San Ramon, CA

Avantika Johri '18
Mumbai, India

Grinnell attracts people from all over the world, making us a highly diverse campus. Preserving the many cultures we are privileged to have here and keeping Grinnell global are important for the international student community. The reason we started the South Asian Student Organization was because there seemed to be a real need for something like SASO within the Desi community at Grinnell! Many people were passionate about having an organization on campus – in fact, we weren't the only ones at the time who wanted to make a group like SASO, so support from them really helped guide us towards establishing what the organization is becoming.

Our main objectives are to create an association that not only highlights the all-encompassing, shared notion of being South Asian, but also celebrates and brings to light the nuanced cultures of individual countries within the subcontinent. Highlighting the diversity within South Asia is something we feel has been neglected, so we aspire to have SASO as a platform to do this better.

For many years, students have organized a Diwali festival on campus, which is the Hindu festival of lights and is widely celebrated throughout India and Nepal. This year's event was a real success, with lively performances and over 200 attendees (thank you to the CRSSJ for supporting us). But what was more important was the fact that we made a lasting memory for the community, especially for those who are graduating this year. Nothing could have made us happier, so we want to bring more events like this to campus in order to share our rich cultural history and festivities.

We are currently in the process of expanding and solidifying our organization; a cabinet is in the works with 'representatives' from each country within the umbrella of South Asia. SASO is still in its early stages, which means a lot of what we are doing is trial and error. Most of what we've accomplished so far has been from asking a lot of questions. We are trying to do the best we can on our own, but at some point we have to admit that complexly understanding the varying identities South Asians possess is not a small task that can be done alone. The more people we have voicing their identities, the more successful SASO will be.

We hope to leave behind a legacy in the form of an established, solid organization that can be passed down to Grinnellians from year to year. Even as students graduate from the College, our sense of community should not falter. When South Asian students come to Grinnell, we want to make sure they have a place to connect them with home. At the same time, we want SASO to be an opportunity for people to newly familiarize themselves and learn about our South Asian culture! If there's one thing we really pride Grinnellians on, it's their enthusiasm for embracing culture and celebrating a myriad of identities.



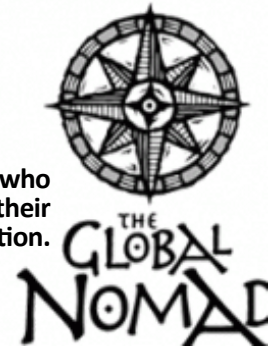


Diwali '15

Where's Home?

Cassidy Hilburn '19
Haddonfield, NJ

*Global Nomads [sometimes called Third Culture Kids] are individuals who have spent significant parts of their childhood outside of their home country[s] – usually because of a parent's occupation.



Returning from breaks, my go-to small talk bits are: “Did you go home for break?” Potentially, to be followed up with, “Nice! Where’s home?”

Whenever asked the same question, I hesitate with a brief: “uh...” I was born in The Hague, Netherlands. “So you’re Dutch!” Not quite. My response to the question has evolved with me. When I first moved to the United States (Philadelphia area), still carrying a hint of the British accent I had developed from the international primary school I attended, I would just nod and shrug. “I guess,” I would think, “if that’s what you tell me.” Subscribing myself to either nation made me uncomfortable, but having just witnessed the Pledge of Allegiance for the first time, I was thoroughly unnerved by being “American.” In high school, my Dutch card began running out. My British accent had been teased out by cruel middle school comments, and technically, I only have an American passport, so I began the explanation. “No, I grew up there because my mom was a diplomat. I’m American.” Bored, they replied, “Oh. I thought you were the Dutch girl.”

Growing up in a community of expats (expatriates), everyone hailed from various nations they had potentially never been to in person, didn’t have Dutch passports (despite only ever having lived there), and spoke languages at home that weren’t Dutch. They celebrated the culture their parents instilled in them, and while invested in it, the nations to which these celebrations alluded seemed like far-off fantasies. I was one of the few students at my primary school who returned to their “home nation” (the one from which they have a passport) with any regularity. I would visit my extended family and familiarize myself with American culture; analyzing Disney Channel and the concept of expansive backyards. When I moved to the United States at eleven, I assumed I would ‘catch up’ with the national identity I was supposed to comfortably associate with – the culture legally “right” for me.

In time, I have found myself disassociating from both. While I get nostalgic returning to Holland and reflecting on pieces of Dutch culture I miss, in time it becomes easier to see the things that I do not appreciate about life there. I find myself identifying more with American traditions, but still feel discomfort when wished a “Happy Independence Day!” Life in South Holland shaped my character, just as time on the East Coast and Midwest has. The three homes

I have cultivated in my lifetime – The Hague, the Philadelphia area, and Grinnell – all represent unique cultures and communities in which I have lived and grown. To me, these homes are defined more by faces than flags; the people in these homes and the love I have experienced transcending a legal document defining me as “American.”

After receiving our roommate designations this summer, I messaged my future Cleveland companion. “Where are you from?” I asked.

“It’s kind of complicated,” she replied. “I lived in Japan until I was 9, and then came to North Carolina, and then Connecticut, and I go back and forth to and from Japan and there.”

“Where’s home?” People inquire our roomie duo. “Uh...” we laugh.





FIS Pumpkin Carving '15

Pastéis

First-Prize Recipe from
ISO Food Bazaar Fall 2015

John Vitor Franca '17
Brasilia, Brazil

When I heard about this year's Food Bazaar, I did not hesitate to sign up with a friend. For the uninitiated, the International Student Organization hosts a "pot luck" every November where any student can cook a dish for the event. In order to incentivize students to cook, ISO buys all the ingredients needed, and hands out free tickets for the chefs. As a third year who has gone to the Food Bazaar every year I've been in Grinnell, I can confidently say that it is my favorite ISO event. It is a great way for the international community to bond with the rest of the Grinnell student body, faculty, and even townies!

I am an international student from Brazil, so naturally my co-chef Roberta Dutra '16 and I decided to cook one of the most popular street foods in Brazil: pastéis. A pastel is a piece of deep fried dough that has different kinds of fillings. The oil cooks the dough to golden, crunchy perfection while at the same time melts the ingredients inside into gooey deliciousness. Roberta and I decided to make three of the most iconic types of pastéis: meat, mozzarella cheese, and the flavor that proved to be the crowd favorite: banana with mozzarella cheese and cinnamon sugar.

Although our dish was relatively easy to make, it was very labor intensive. We spent the entire day rolling out dough and cut them into small circles which we filled later. It was time consuming, but we managed to finish frying it in time, scurrying over at 4:50 p.m. to an event that would start at 5:00 p.m. As I entered the venue of the Food Bazaar, I realized why I love the Food Bazaar so much. Rather than the usual smells of alcohol, sweaty individuals, and sometimes vomit that one can experience on Saturday nights at Harris, I was instead greeted with the aromas of 52 different dishes. The sheer cultural diversity was astounding, not only regarding food but also in people as well. As I walked around looking at the other dishes which I would try, I heard many diverse languages, from Spanish to Japanese to Swahili.

Roberta and I quickly scampered over to our designated spots and began serving people. To my surprise, our dish was particularly well received. Before long, Chef Turley Scott and Amber Lacina came by to judge our pastéis, and soon after that, we were out of food...which was great because it meant we could finally try the other dishes. Because of the huge variety of food, there was an option for ev-

eryone, even Mac n' Cheese for the internationals who had never tried it before. I personally enjoyed jollof, from Ghana (shout out to Sydney Quartey '18 and Mama Ampofo-Tenkorang '18) as well as roasted lamb (thanks to Otabek Nazarov '18 and Elvira Nurmukhamedova '19). After gorging myself for a while, the winners were announced, and to my complete astonishment, Roberta and I had the winning dish. Chef Scott Turley told us that he would've never thought that banana and cheese could ever taste well together, which was echoed by the others who tried our dish. I was particularly excited about the newfound interest in Brazilian cuisine from so many people.

Ultimately, this year's Food Bazaar was a huge personal success, not because of a first place trophy which will soon be forgotten, but because of the successful exposition of different cultures and foods. There are some perks to winning, however: our dish will be served in the dining hall this spring semester, so look out for it!



Ingredients

3 cups of flour
1 cup of warm water
1 tablespoon of salt
2 tablespoons of oil
Granulated sugar
Bananas,
Mozzarella cheese
Cinnamon

Method

1. Mix the flour, water, salt and oil together to make a dough. Knead it thoroughly and let it rest for at least 30 minutes.
2. While the dough rests, dice your bananas and mix it with the sugar and cinnamon (depending on how sweet you like your bananas).
3. Dice the mozzarella cheese
4. Next, roll out the dough and cut it into circular shapes (approx. 5 inches in diameter) and put your filling inside (including small pieces of cheese). Make sure that your circular piece of dough can fold on itself.
5. Using a fork, press the edges of the dough together, so that it forms a half circle. Take this and deep fry it in hot oil for approximately 2 minutes or until golden brown.





One Thousand Paper Cranes

Erhaan Ahmad '18
Karachi, Pakistan

Based on the true story of Sadako Sasaki, the book *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* tells the story of a young girl who lived in Hiroshima at the time of the atomic bombing by the United States. She was 2 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945, near her home by Misasa Bridge in Hiroshima, Japan. In November 1954, when Sadako was 12, she developed swellings on her neck and behind her ears. In January 1955, purple spots had formed on her legs. Subsequently, she was diagnosed with leukemia (her mother referred to it as "an atom bomb disease"). She was hospitalized on February 21, 1955, and given, at the most, a year to live.

After being diagnosed with leukemia from the radiation, Sadako spent her time in a nursing home folding origami paper cranes in hope of making a thousand of them. She was inspired to do so by

the Japanese legend that one who created a thousand origami cranes would be granted a wish. Her wish was simply to live. However, she managed to fold only 644 cranes before she became too weak to fold any more, and died on the morning of 25 October 1955. Her friends and family helped finish her dream by folding the rest of the cranes, which were buried with Sadako.

However, the claim in the book that Sadako "died before completing the 1000 cranes, and her friends completed the task, placing the finished cranes in her casket" is not backed up by her surviving family members. According to her family, and especially her older brother Masahiro Sasaki who speaks on his sister's life at events, Sadako not only exceeded 644 cranes, she exceeded her goal of 1000 and died having folded approximately 1,300 paper cranes. Mr. Sasaki and the family have do-

nated some of Sadako's cranes at places of importance around the world: in NYC at the 9/11 memorial, and at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

After her death, Sadako's friends and schoolmates published a collection of letters in order to raise funds to build a memorial to her and all of the children who had died from the effects of the atomic bomb. In 1958, a statue of Sadako holding a golden crane was unveiled in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, also called the Genbaku Dome, and installed in the Hiroshima Peace Park.

At the foot of the statue is a plaque that reads: *"This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace on Earth."* Every year on Obon Day, which is a holiday in Japan to remember the departed spirits of one's ancestors, thousands of people leave paper cranes near the statue.



The level of unrest in the U.S. & around the world burdens our hearts & minds...



Come help us fold **Origami Cranes as a gesture of peace & good will.**

Tues Dec. 8, 7-9 pm, JRC 2nd floor
(during ISO's Cranes and Crepes Study Break!)

Cranes For Peace

Floods in Chennai

Mithila Iyer '19
Chennai, India

Chennai is a city in the state of Tamil Nadu, on the southeastern coast of India. It's sleepy and stubborn – steeped in the colonial past, but cautiously stepping forward into the information age. We have the second longest beach in the world (the Marina!), and the best coffee in all of India. Our hobbies range from going to Carnatic music festivals to the latest Marvel movie, and of course moaning about the weather – and deservedly so. The average temperature is 30 degrees C (about 86 F), and the summers are brutal. However, we've all learned to adapt and accept it as part of life in this beautiful city.

It is natural then, in a place so hot and humid, that the rains are eagerly awaited and much loved. Every year, between November and January, the southwest monsoon visits Tamil Nadu. On particularly rainy days, schools, colleges, and workplaces are all given the day off, and people spend lazy afternoons snoozing and listening to music.

The heaviest and most devastating monsoon in a hundred years hit us last December. November had been a month of steadily increasing rain, and on December 2nd, Chennai was officially declared a disaster area. The rain, which was so beloved and much awaited for, had turned into the cause of one of the biggest natural disasters to affect the area since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

A word on the effects. Flooding was rampant – there were parts of the city in which water ran over the roofs of cars. People who lived in the low-lying parts of the city had to vacate their houses, because water reached the second floor story in some places. Thankfully, no one that I know personally was affected by this. The international airport was closed, because the underbellies of planes were submerged into water. All buses, rails, and roads leading to the city were deemed unsafe to travel on, so no one could get in or out. Power shortages abounded, people had to leave their homes, basic necessities such as bread and milk ran out, and almost 300 people lost their lives.

I was in Grinnell at this time, preparing for my final exams and deciding what to wear for winter waltz. I knew that the rains were bad this year, but nothing prepared me for when my mother called me and told me about the situation. I think

that was the worst I have ever felt for being somewhere else, and the most homesick I have ever been over here. To be in another country and unable to help when your home is literally drowning was incredibly difficult. I was lucky to have extremely supportive friends and professors, who would ask about how things back home were, and make sure that everything was as well as it could be.

Chennai isn't viewed as one of the "cooler" cities in India, and people love to generalize about us. It wouldn't have been possible for us to start getting back on our feet if not for the tightknit aid and volunteer network its citizens formed, pitching in with whatever they could. What we lack for in nightlife, we make up for in humanity, and this is what makes me proud to be from the best city ever: the resilience within every resident, and the love they have for each other.



Our "Rare Birds"



A Rare Bird is...

[a rare species; very unusual characteristics and a free mind & spirit; a cooky but very awesome and cool animal.] - Urban Dictionary

[a term of endearment for non-immigrant Grinnellians with two or less fellow nationals on campus.] - OISA

Grinnell enrolls over 250 international students. Our largest national cohorts are from China, India, Vietnam, and South Korea, and 14 other countries are represented by 3-10 students. This November, we spent some time thinking about how life at Grinnell might feel for students who are alone, or have only one peer here from home. We invited over 30 students to a dinner for 'rare birds' – a term of endearment that we've coined for these brave individuals who have journeyed from 25 countries to spend four years with us in Iowa. The group spanned multiple continents, class years, residence hall clusters, and academic disciplines. For this evening, Grinnell House served as our getaway location.

"I feel like a rare bird when I am the only person celebrating the Czech Independence Day," said Mishka Gelnarova '18. "I was a rare bird, but when all the rare birds came together, I wasn't rare anymore because uniqueness became our commonality," said Deqa Aden '18, who is from Somalia.

Several shared feelings of loneliness set in when something significant happens back home. It might be a national holiday, a cultural tradition, or a significant political event or national disaster. But "when people here aren't aware of something that's important to me, I remember that I'm alone." One student spoke about language, and feeling envious of peers with more friends from home who can socialize in their native tongue. Another brought knowing laughter into the room, sharing a story about a naïve question she'd received about her home country. Elvira Nurmukhamedova '19 commented, during another event this year, that most people here know very little about her home country (Uzbekistan). This can be frustrating - but it also means that she rarely falls

victim to negative stereotypes.

The idea that rare birds can "make things up and no one will know any better" brought knowing laughter.

While it is often a challenge to be alone and so far from home, a number of students also spoke about the freedom they feel – viewing their independence as refreshing and empowering. One mentioned how special it felt, when he had first realized that the Flag in the JRC Gallery was there because of him! Natnael Shibru '18, from Ethiopia and Carlo Morini Cobo '19, from Colombia shared how nice it has been to meet U.S. students with strong family ties to their respective homes. Anastasiia Morozova '18 and

Vasilisa Bashlovkina '16, both from Russia have appreciated the connection to the Russian department and the Russian language house. Several students spoke about appreciating the opportunity to teach others about their home country or culture - in the classroom, in social settings, or in the local community. For instance, Gelnarova has had the chance to teach Czech through the Alternative Language Study (ALSO) program. Aleksandar Hrusanov '18 presented about his home country, Bulgaria, at the Mayflower and the Lions Club. Jackie Mukinisha '16, led an effort to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide. She organized

a walk, and shared some facts and personal insights with over 20 participants. When she was living in Brunei, Ala Akkad '19 has appreciated the chance to offer some perspective on the situation in her native, Syria. While several spoke to the implicit pressure to represent their country in events such as the ISO Cultural Evening or Food Bazaar, they also appreciated the opportunity to do so. Gelnarova for example, had been inspired to represent her homeland during the ISO Cultural Evening – she stood on stage as a solo act, and taught the audience some Czech vocabulary!

It is human nature to seek community, and to look for attributes that connect you to others. Helping all students feel connected in some way is also an important goal for a small residential campus. On behalf of the Office of International Student Affairs, we hope that Grinnell's 'rare birds' are no exception! You are important to us, and we celebrate your unique contributions to this place.



Global Grinnell Task Force

Todd Armstrong, *Russian*

“Hester Hollis, class of 1865, was one of the first Grinnellians to make their mark in the world, when she traveled to South Asia to teach for over two decades....” I’ve used some version of that sentence whenever I’ve talked about the long and storied history of Grinnell’s global engagement. Indeed, the international and global nature of the College had long been a focus when I arrived in 1993, and has since been on the agenda of several strategic plans, including one that saw the founding of the Center for International Studies in 2001—and in the most recent plan, as evidenced in President Kington’s formation of the Global Grinnell Task Force (GGTF), which was convened in Fall 2014. Its work reflects our ongoing commitment to internationalization at the College, a vital aspect of our mission in an era of ever-increasing globalization. We’re now in the final stages of a two-year process, and in taking stock, we’ve made tremendous progress; from my perspective, we’re closer than ever before to comprehensive internationalization at the College.

Co-chaired by Dean Mike Latham and myself, the GGTF was one of the most representative groups I’ve ever worked with at Grinnell, and included members of all constituencies on campus—students, faculty, and staff. Its charge was broad: we were to conduct an assessment of global engagement and connections throughout all major functions of the College; communicate effectively with the campus about internationalization initiatives; lead a campus-wide discussion about student global learning goals and assessment; and, ultimately, form an internationalization plan and make recommendations to the President.

We divided our group into five subcommittees, each charged with different aspects of internationalization: international students, off-campus study, the curriculum, co-curricular and campus life, and external partnerships. Over the course of the next year, the five groups gathered, summarized, and assessed data, met with relevant constituencies, and began drafting key questions and findings to share with the College community in a series of open town halls, in faculty and staff meetings, with student groups, and with the Board of Trustees. Our intention was to keep the process open and transparent, and to incorporate as much as possible the diverse ideas and concerns of the entire community. We created a series of goals and recommendations for each aspect of internationalization, and then developed three overarching recommendations.

The subcommittee on international students proposed strategies for better understanding our enrollment of international students: their curricular choices and use of academic resources; their unique social and cultural needs and contributions; and the challenges of regulatory compliance. The group also recommended finding ways to anticipate the challenges facing students from diverse regional, economic, and academic backgrounds, and advocated for the need to improve our system of support in order to better promote international student success.

The subcommittee on off-campus study underscored the need to analyze the costs and to determine how to sustain broad availability of off-campus study opportunities for all students, both domestic and international. They considered ways in which we integrate off-campus experiences with our on-campus curriculum, noting the importance of a more intentional integration of off-campus study into curricular requirements, and an improvement in the ability of faculty to advise students for study off campus. They also emphasized the importance of enabling students to better articulate the value of off-campus study to potential employers, graduate schools, and other audiences.

The subcommittee on global learning and the curriculum first focused on developing a set of learning goals that might be used in developing a more globally oriented curriculum. One area that remains a challenge at the College is the establishment of an internationally oriented major at Grinnell—something the group thinks worth pursuing. They also considered assessment and how the global content of majors and concentrations could be integrated into the process of regular department and program reviews. The group also stressed the need for more support for internationally focused faculty and student research.

The subcommittee on co-curricular programming and campus life developed a number of ways Grinnell can become more globally engaged in our co-curricular program, seeking to expand Grinnell’s reach in a global context—locally, regionally, and abroad. Through the Center for Careers, Life, and Service (CLS) and other offices, the College should promote more international opportunities for students, through collaborations with international businesses and organizations that would include potential internships and service engagements. Creating a truly global institution begins at home, and the group recom-

knowledge of global issues and experiences. They also emphasized the pressing need to increase engagement with our alumni community living outside the U.S.

Grinnell has traditionally partnered with institutions in other countries; consider our long-standing exchange with Nanjing University, a multilateral arrangement that involves students, faculty, and staff from both institutions. Initiated by various groups across the campus, such partnerships are crucial to internationalization, and would benefit from more intentional coordination and integration, and a more comprehensive strategic approach. Hence, the subcommittee proposed creating principles and priorities for external partnerships, in order to assess and support existing ones, and explore and create new relationships. This subcommittee also recognized that local and regional partnerships ought to figure in any discussion of internationalization—from collaboration with local schools, to developing internships at internationally engaged regional organizations, to collaborating with the increasingly diverse communities of Iowa.

Synthesizing the work of the subcommittees, we made three overarching recommendations. The first is to incorporate international learning goals and priorities in the College's statements of mission and identity and communications for external audiences, with an eye towards the forthcoming capital campaign. Second, we advocated for a vital physical presence for international programming in the construction of new academic space on campus. Related to this recommendation, we also argued for a stronger, integrative role for the Center for International Studies, with the Center taking on a larger, coordinating function with regard to planning among academic centers, depart-

ments, and concentrations, and setting out options for an administrative structure involving the CIS, Off-Campus Study, a new language resource center, and, in a new move for the college, the Office of International Student Affairs. Finally, we recommended developing strategic nodes and partnerships—places where the College's multiple international relationships and priorities converge, and where Grinnell could focus its efforts in the future.

Regarding new space, one of the most exciting things happening at the College right now is the planning of the new Humanities and Social Studies complex. I've been a part of that effort, and we are on the threshold of a pioneering renovation and expansion of Carnegie and ARH. The new building is a bold step in creating a collaborative space by drawing in the faculty and staff of the humanities and social studies, and one of its important features, which the work of the GGTF informed, will be a global learning center that brings together the Center for International Studies, the Office of International Student Affairs, the office of Off-Campus Studies. It will also include a new language resource center, which is particularly exciting to me as a Russian professor and member of Grinnell's Languages for Life. It will include space for dynamic peer-mentoring, offices for our wonderful foreign language assistants, and a language study area, which we hope will resound with the voices of the many languages spoken and studied at Grinnell. And of course the new global learning center will function in close collaboration with the all constituencies in the new complex, and with the entire campus, fulfilling the vision of establishing our Global Grinnell for years to come—perhaps, even, for the Hester Hollis of the class of 2065.



*[The American Council on Education's model of comprehensive internationalization
<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization>.*

Perspectives on My Gap Year

Danica Bojovic '19
Belgrade, Serbia

For me, taking a gap year was not as cool and adventurous a decision as people might expect. On the contrary, the rejection letters from 10 colleges left me no choice at all. I decided to give myself another shot - to take a gap year and try again. The second time applying, I decided to go in with no expectations. I came to terms with the fact that I might not end up studying at Grinnell. At the same time, my desire to do so was as strong as ever.



Although I find it difficult to admit, a gap year was exactly what I needed at the time. After a stressful and dramatic time in high school, I was exhausted. The ambition of studying abroad was one of the main things that kept me motivated throughout my

senior year, but with the College rejections came a loss of confidence and motivation. I've realized over time, however, that exchanging the stress of my senior year for the stress of adjusting to a new environment may not have been beneficial for me. Instead, I got to spend a whole year socializing over coffee with my friends and sleeping long hours. I had a lot of time to think about the mistakes in my applications, and more importantly to come to terms with my college rejections.

The second round of applying to colleges was immeasurably easier. I was better prepared. I dedicated all my thoughts and time to it, taking the application slowly and thoroughly. This time around, I was actually admitted to seven colleges! It took me three weeks to process the fact that I had been admitted. After all, the application process had become a very significant part of my life; we were together for years. Going to college was like a nasty break up. Taking a burden like that off my back was surprisingly challenging, because the application arena had become something safe for me. It was something I was comfortable with, even if it was the result of my failure. College, on the other hand, was unknown territory, even if it was exciting and good for my future.

Rejection and failure erase very easily, once you get into a school like Grinnell. I don't usually like cheesy conclusions, but I'll make one anyway... Thousands of failures suddenly felt completely irrelevant, compared to this one success. This truly is the reason why I don't believe in giving up, and taking five gap years for this opportunity would still be a good idea in my opinion.

As for the adjustment to college, I feel like it is a natural process for everyone. Maybe it was even easier for me, in the sense that I had been anticipating it for such a long time. I've had time to think about all the issues I might face, and my academic ambitions were also growing while I was waiting for this chance.

We are all here trying to create new home, make new friends, and cope with rigorous academic work. This challenge is actually very similar for domestic and international students, as it is for people who took a gap year and those who started college "regularly."

Meet Lil' JB?

Jon Edwards, Sr. Associate Director of Admission & Coordinator of International Admission

"Greetings from the international admissions trail! That is where you usually find me, Lil' JB Grinnell. I'm not always on the road, though some people think am. Beginning this past fall travel season, I have accompanied Jon Edwards, Grinnell's coordinator of international admission, on his travels to recruit new Grinnellians from around the world. He's been doing it for almost 20 years and has visited hundreds of high schools in 82 countries! This year, we hit eleven - including India, Japan, Thailand, The Netherlands, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland, to name a few. Usually, we travel with a small group of admissions friends from other peer colleges, visiting schools and hosting evening informational programs together. Sometimes, I get to meet prospective students too - this year in Vietnam! (use the picture of students holding him here). I've been on subways, in tuk-tuks, on bullet trains, and in all types of airplanes.

Technically, I'm a holiday ornament/figurine, though Jon promptly cut off my hook and freed me from that one-dimensional existence. I still don't know why he picked me out of all the other ornaments in the Wilson Bookstore on that fateful day, but I'm forever grateful.

We are good for each other, really. I get him off the beaten path from time to time, as he looks to photograph me in unique locations for my **#liljbgrinnell Instagram account**. You can follow me there, or see my webpage:

<https://grinnellcollege.exposure.co/34e947dc1c085f12c1f59bbea3fd8ce3>

I've never been your garden-variety gnome. Jon has given me the chance to live out my true calling as a roaming gnome! With every trip, I come to understand this sentiment a bit better, "Like all great travelers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen."

– Benjamin Disraeli



Lil' JB's Travels



Lil' JB tries to embrace new cultures from a first-hand perspective. Being a true Midwesterner, his haggling skills proved mediocre at best.



Lil' JB scores yet again with Airbnb, this time in Thailand.



Lil' JB proudly representing Grinnell at the CIS Forum, Edinburgh!



Lil' JB receives a gracious welcome to Chiang Mai. He hopes his hosts will understand that he is unable to reciprocate their greeting...



Lil' JB drops in at Roman Ridge School in Accra, Ghana. Akwaaba! (Welcome)



So close, and yet so far... Lil' JB is delayed in Newark by Chicago snows. Fortunately, he's still got a few British treats left...



Lil' JB buys into the Loch Ness myth, but did not want to shell out the 60 quid for a proper tour. This'll do.



Touching down for Lil' JB Grinnell's first time in the Kingdom of Swaziland!

"Take a photo before it's too late"

Exploring Sustainability with the Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship

Xiaoxuan (Jessie) Yang '17
Shanghai, China

I was thrilled to receive the Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship to study sustainability in American landscapes. After contacting several alumni through the school forum for help in housing and trip advice, I stepped on a plane to Seattle alone with a suitcase full of expectations and excitement. I was welcomed by Aditi Roy '13 and the Thai food she prepared for me after my late night arrival. Here began an exploration of green practices, endangered landscapes, U.S. history, and people.

The first part of my trip lasted 12 days. I traveled to Seattle, Portland, Lake Tahoe, and San Francisco. I learned about current green practices by visiting organizations and studying green architecture. Rachel Stamm '94 showed me around the Bullitt Center, which is one of the leading green buildings in the country. The first thing we noticed about the building was its large glass windows with office desks next to them, which maximized the effect of natural daylight. A German company produced those windows, but interestingly that company did not ship the windows all the way from Germany. Instead, they purchased factories in Seattle and produced those windows locally. This act not only saved energy and time that would have been spent by shipping, but also made those windows available to other future contractors.

Rachel provided me with more insight as we toured the building and visited Impact Hub, where I learned about the new working style of self-employed workers. People cooperate with each other, generate creative ideas and share the same work space. Besides passing on knowledge about green practices, Rachel also took me to a Kansas family reunion where I learned about how people share their family traditions, which reminds me of how my family celebrates big holidays and worships our ancestors. Throughout the whole 12 days, I visited many different ecosystems, such as the Muir Woods National Monument in San Francisco; the Columbia River Gorge, where the Bonneville Dam was located to produce hydroelectric power; and Lake Tahoe, where the water was as blue as the sky. I also visited Alcatraz Island and Gum Wall in Seattle; I had phone interviews with people such as Eli Zigas '06, who talked about his position as a Food and Agriculture Policy Director in San Francisco. My only regret is that I wish

I could have spent longer in those amazing cities and experienced their individual culture more.

For the second half of my trip, I went to the Boston area and Providence, Rhode Island. The most memorable thing I saw at Cape Cod was the Little Sippewissett Marsh. As I biked along the Shining Sea Bikeway, I encountered this beautiful marsh with its vibrant green plants. Right after I parked my bike and took out my cell phone to capture this natural beauty, I saw someone had carved on a wooden fence, "Take a photo before it's too late." A sad feeling awakened in my chest; it was like when my plane landed in Seattle and I saw the snowless mountain top of Mt. Rainier due to the drought, and also when I saw the smoke from forest fires at the skyline of Portland on my way to the Columbia River Gorge. Before the trip, I somehow had lost the compassion for nature due to my busy work and study schedule at Grinnell. After I returned, I realized my love for nature has grown because of the endangered environments I saw during the trip. And I believe this is what I needed in order to have a concentration in Environmental Studies: true empathy towards our Mother Earth.

I learned more than my intended topic of the environment and sustainability. From my trip to Salem and Providence, I also learned about U.S. history. Going to Salem during Halloween was an amazing experience of a lifetime. My adviser, Professor David Campbell, recommended that I read *The Crucible*, which added a new perspective to my traveling experience. The manipulation of people's fear of supernatural powers was not a very inspirational part of American history. I also visited Providence, where historical buildings, such as Providence's First Baptist Church in America, added a quaint flavor to the small compact place. During the trip, I visited many different universities and attended their classes, which made me appreciate Grinnell more because of its small-size classes and enthusiastic professors. But I also see what we can learn from places such as Brown University where students need to clean their public bathrooms by themselves, which requires a lot of self-governance.

Traveling alone has given me the valuable experience of making new friends. At the start of my trip, I made two flight buddies, Susan, a cheerful lady from southwest Des Moines and Dean-

row on her face at all because of her optimism. Deanna lost 150lbs by adjusting her diet and became a weight loss trainer as a part-time job besides working at Amazon. I was nervous to travel alone at first. But I realized because of those people I met along the way—random strangers, alumni and friends—I never felt lonely. It seems so easy to be inspired as long as you are brave enough to open your heart and talk.



Rachel Stamm '94, Klondike National Park, Seattle



Little Sippewissett Marsh

I am really thankful that I had all these opportunities to meet new people and go to new places that I will never forget in my life. Studying sustainability would not be the same if I had just read everything from a textbook.

What is the Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship?

The Fischlowitz is a unique \$5,000 award available to one Grinnell College international student each year, to be used to learn more about the United States through independent travel.

Made possible through the generous support of Merle Fischlowitz '53, the fellowship was established to help Grinnell's international students pursue casual, yet purposeful, exploration of the United States -- an experience that Mr. Fischlowitz believes to be an important part of their immersion in U.S. culture.

Who is eligible to apply?

Grinnell College international students in first, second, or third year standing. (Preference is given to applicants who have not previously had the chance to travel extensively in the U.S.)

What themes have previous recipients explored?

Lots of things! Recent recipients have undertaken travel on topics as varied as college sports, the original thirteen colonies, national parks, and the evolution of gospel music.

When and how can I apply?

The Fischlowitz application deadline falls in early February of each year, and involves both a written proposal and interview.

To learn more about how to apply, contact Jaime Chambers in the OISA and visit: <http://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/internation->

Tokyo • Seoul • Beijing

Grinnell College East Asia Seminar, Summer 2015

Karen Edwards, OISA

Grinnell's Center for International Studies (CIS) sponsors a Faculty Development Seminar every other year. Seminar participants study and travel to an intentional destination, with the goal of enhancing the international dimension of Grinnell's curriculum. This past summer, a group traveled to Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing, with a focus on economic development, women's issues, and climate change. The trip was designed and coled by Jack Mutti, David Harrison, and Keith Brouhle.

In the semester preceding our trip, we gathered monthly to discuss assigned readings and hear from Grinnellians who have studied or lived in the region, and this work made a direct impact on our travel itinerary. Throughout our travels, we met with a variety of scholars and dignitaries - intent on learning and observing as much as we could in our short visits to these amazing and influential cities.

In Tokyo, we visited with representatives from the Bureau of Social Welfare, Public Health, and the Environment; the Japanese Business Federation; and Toyota. We toured the Edo Museum, and visited the Gakushuin campus. We also enjoyed a lovely reception with Grinnellians of the past, present, and future.

In Seoul, we were hosted by Grinnell Trustee Kihwan Kim and were also delighted to meet with a sizable gathering of Grinnellians. We visited Government Ministries to hear about the environment, aging, gender roles, and IT planning. We toured the Samsung Innovation Museum, the National Museum, and Yonsei University.

In Beijing, we visited Carnegie Tsinghua University and met with scholars regarding energy and climate, as well as the informal economy, urbanization, and rural to urban migration. We spent one evening with a documentary filmmaker, and another with Grinnell students and alum.

Many of the seminar participants stayed on to visit Shanghai, and to spend time with friends and colleagues from Grinnell's long-time partnership with Nanjing University.

For some, this was a return to the region. For others, it was a first time visit. Regardless, it was an outstanding experience to travel and learn together. The trip has made, and will continue to make, a direct impact on our work at Grinnell.

Seminar participants: Keith Brouhle '96, Economics • Karen Edwards, OISA • Jin Feng, Chinese • Brad Graham, Economics • Patrick Inglis, Sociology • Wayne Moyer, Political Science • Jack Mutti, Economics • Elizabeth Queathem, Biology • Mariko Shigetate Schimmel, Japanese • Barb Trish, Political Science



Top: *The Seminar participants, with our Tokyo host Ken Matsmoto, Grew Bancroft Foundation, and Ibuki Ogasawara '17.*

Middle: *A selfie in Bukchon Hanok Village in Seoul, with Sooji Son '18.*

Bottom: *with Dr. Matt Ferchen at Carnegie Tsinghua University, learning about China's informal economy.*

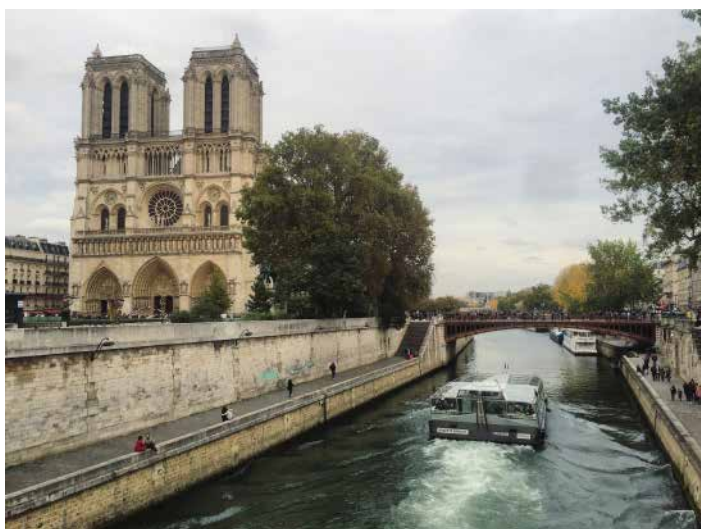
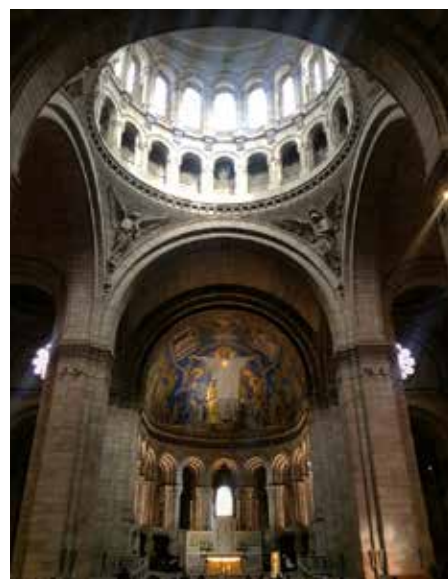
A Semester In Prague

Saw Min Maw '16
Yangon, Myanmar

I studied abroad last semester in Europe and it was – yes you guessed it – amazing. My OCS program was a film program in Prague, but I carpe diem-ed the opportunity to EasyJet around the continent and expand my horizon as much as my (read: parents') wallet allowed. I experienced all the rich history, culture, art, architecture, fashion, public transportation, dogs without leashes, cheaper-than-water-beer, tapas, and sangria. They were unparalleled to anything I've (not) experienced. It was amazing and overwhelming. Every new city I visited, I fell in love with it in a different way than the last. Each one was charming in its own special way.

Amidst all this first world wonder, I actually caught myself thinking about home anytime I came across something I admired. It bordered on jealousy.

When I used 24/7 tram services or the perfectly timed metro system, I wondered why Yangon couldn't have this? I gazed at the grandeur of cathedrals and churches that were preserved so perfectly through time, and wondered about what I find to be valuable in Yangon. It was difficult not to compare these two countries, because of both their historical differences and similarities. Both Prague and the other cities I visited in different parts of Europe taught me to look at home in new ways. The lessons I learned abroad are ones I'll always cherish. For that and so many more reasons, I found some of the best four months of my life in Prague.



F-1 Status: A Primer for Non-International Students

Karen Edwards, International Student Affairs, DSO/RO

Grinnellians celebrate the diverse experiences of our global student body, and most can articulate the value of living and learning with classmates and friend from around the world. That said, those of us from within the U.S. often have a limited understanding of the regulatory realities that international students face. I've outlined here, a few ways that F-1 status translates into extra responsibilities, special considerations, and unique constraints.

Before an F-1 may enter...

International students apply to Grinnell using the Common Application, along with secondary school records and scores from the SAT/ACT and TOEFL (Test of English as a Second Language). They may also apply for institutional financial aid (international student admission is not need-blind). About 8% are accepted. Once admitted, they must request a Form I-20 from the OISA by presenting a valid Passport, showing funds to cover the 1st year at Grinnell, and providing evidence of their funding sources for the remaining three years. They submit the SEVIS Fee, and visit a U.S. Embassy to apply for an F-1 student visa. During the visa interview, they must articulate the purpose of their studies and they must exhibit non-immigrant intent. The Consulate typically retains the Passport, and the student goes home to wait in anticipation. This wait can take several days, or several months. It may require a background check. Assuming the visa is issued, the student may travel to the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the start of IPOP. Their immigration documents are presented again, at the Port of Entry, and they may be questioned further.

<http://www.internationalstudent.com/immigration/f1-student-visa/how-to-apply-f1-visa/>

During their studies...

Upon arrival, students report to the OISA to be registered in SEVIS, and the OISA will continue to register them at the start of each semester, until they graduate. This is how Grinnell confirms to Homeland Security that the student is following through on their reason

for visiting the U.S.! F-1 students must be enrolled full time, with limited exceptions. Any drop below 12 credits must be pre-approved, due to: linguistic difficulties in the 1st term; poor advising; a documented medical condition; or being in the final semester before graduation. In addition, students may work on-campus no more than 20 hrs/week when school is in session, and up to 40 hrs/week during breaks.

When an F-1 student leaves and re-enters the U.S. they must present their I-20 (endorsed by a Designated School Official), a valid Passport, and Visa. If there are changes in their personal or academic information (their home or U.S. address/residence hall, major, expenses and funding, etc.) the OISA must update SEVIS and print an new I-20. They can participate in study abroad, course embedded travel, or internships/externships abroad – but there are unique visa issues and timelines. They need a visa to travel to the location of this adventure, and they must have (or secure) documentation to return to the U.S. Securing a visa as a third country national might require a visit to the Consulate, and it may take several months and require finger prints or background checks.

While they are in the U.S., F-1 students may not accept payment (cash, wages, stipends, fellowships, honorarium, room, board) from a source other than the College, without first securing Employment Authorization - which is limited to work that is directly related to their major field of study.

CPT: Curricular Practical Training is appropriate for internships/research that earn Grinnell credit. Summer internship credit is billed at ½ rate, and two credits costs about \$1,500. Credit for internships is vetted through Careers Life & Service, and CPT is authorized by the OISA.

OPT: F-1 students also get 12 months of Optional Practical Training per degree. OPT can be used before, or immediately following graduation. The OISA supports the OPT application, which costs \$380 and takes 90 days to adjudicate via USCIS. Once OPT is secured, the time cannot be rescinded. We encourage students to reserve OPT until after they graduate.



which costs \$380 and takes 90 days to adjudicate via USCIS. Once OPT is secured, the time cannot be rescinded. We encourage students to reserve OPT until after they graduate.

Unpaid internships supported by Grinnell Grant Funding are viewed as academic experiences, and don't usually require Employment Authorization. That said, there is no formal way to "authorize" other kinds of unpaid/volunteer experiences in the U.S. (unless they qualify for OPT or CPT).

All non-residents are required to file a U.S. Tax Return. F-1 students might owe taxes, they may be eligible for a refund, or they may simply need to report their physical presence. This depends on how much taxable income they had, how much tax was already withheld, and if they benefit from a tax treaty. Tax on wages are withheld based on the W-4 (as with their U.S. peers), but taxes on grants, fellowships, or scholarships that exceed tuition are automatically withheld at a rate of 14% (for non-residents). In recent years, tax refunds that are owed to non-residents based on over payments from grants, fellowships, or scholarships take as long as 6-12 months. The OISA offers free access to a specialized tax compliance software - for F-1 students and recent alum (as well as to our visiting scholars).

A criminal arrest, even a misdemeanor charge, can impact visa renewal, clearance through the port of entry, and/or adjudication of immigration applications. A criminal conviction can result in inadmissibility, deportability, failure to maintain status, and/or ineligibility for adjustment of status. The OISA can offer initial advice, but will typically recommend that a student in this situation consult an attorney who specializes in immigration and criminal law. We also caution non-immigrant students from participation in political activism within the U.S.

After they graduate...

F-1 students are expected to make normal progress toward graduation, and a program extension (be-

yond 8 semesters) requires regulatory approval. Upon graduation, F-1 students can: 1) leave the U.S. (within 60 days); 2) transfer their SEVIS record to a U.S. graduate school; or 3) apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) to work in their field. They must begin work within 90 days of the start of their authorization, and their OPT must end within 14 months of graduation. Students with S.T.E.M. majors (Computer Science; Biology; Biochemistry; Mathematics; Chemistry; and Physics) also have access to 17 additional months of Employment Authorization, subject to specific conditions.

F-1 alumni who are using OPT or the STEM Extension maintain F-1 student status - and even though they have graduated and departed from Grinnell, the OISA is responsible for their SEVIS record. These alum must report extensive employer information, their residential address, and any changes in this information (within 10 days of any change) - and the OISA must report this information in SEVIS. If they depart and re-enter the U.S. during this time, they must still secure a travel endorsement from the OISA, and they must hold (or secure) a valid Passport and F-1 visa. Students who use OPT and the STEM extension are still understood to hold non-immigrant intent.

The OISA is responsible for Grinnell's SEVIS compliance (reporting on F-1 students and J Exchange Visitors) and we teach students about their rights and responsibilities, too. The OISA is the primary campus resource on F-1 student matters, but we collaborate with MANY important partners across the institution - including Admission, Accounting, Careers Life and Service, Student Employment, the Registrar, and others. It is the OISA's goal for Grinnell College to be an 'international-student-friendly' place, dedicated to helping F-1 students manage these extra responsibilities, special considerations, and unique constraints - in order to help them concentrate more fully on engaging as a Grinnellian!











MOSAIC

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