



mosaic

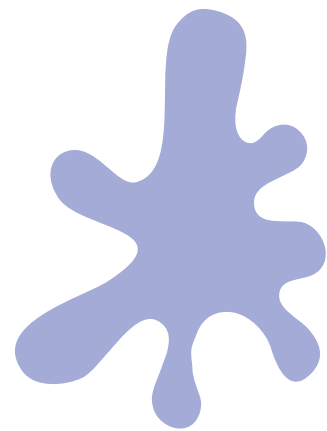
spring '22



CONTENT PAGE

Artist & Editors Note	2
Rare Bird Reflections	3
Fall Down Seven Times, Stand Up Eight (OISA)	7
Recruiting International Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic	9
On Being a First-Year International Student (During a Global Pandemic)	10
IPOP 2021	12
The Golden Retriever [Poem]	15
Middle of Everywhere	16
Exhibition: Vienna	17
Cultural Org Reflections	19
Building Community Outside of the Classroom	22
Global Kitchen	23
Grinnell Reflections During Winter Break	25
What is a Language Learning Center?	26
Off-Campus Study	29
Rediscovering Myself by Reliving History	31
Grinnell-In-London	33
Diminutives	34
Ghosts of Ukraine	35
Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship	38
South Korean Military	39
A Breath of Fresh Air in Copenhagen	41
My Grinnell Experience: Fourth-Year Reflection	43
On Fitting In	45

MOSAIC is an annual publication from the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA). We celebrate diversity and highlight the variety of global adventures that Grinnellians experience. MOSAIC is a collaborative effort, executed by student writers and editors, with funding support from the Institute of Global Engagement (IGE).



EDITOR'S NOTE

Momiji (Momi) Fukushima '22
Ishinomaki, Japan



First and foremost, I would like to thank everyone who has helped me make this magazine: Emily, for being patient while working with me, Karen and Brenda for your kindness and support, Tommy, for his beautiful artwork, and all the MOSAIC writers who shared their experiences with us. As students came back on campus this year, I felt that connections and bonds between students were made again: I hoped this edition of MOSAIC could pick up on these exciting moments where communities were being rebuilt in Grinnell.

The mural below was a source of inspiration for the themes, colors, and decorations you will find in this year's MOSAIC. We invite you to help celebrate the rebirth and renewal of life and spirit on Grinnell's campus as we come back together in our learning, living, and community building.



As a summer intern with the Grinnell Area Arts Council, I collaborated with the Offices of International Student Affairs, and Community Partnerships, Planning, & Research to design a mural and supervise the process of turning it into a physical work of art. One of our main goals was to provide a creative outlet for students who were in Grinnell throughout the pandemic, along with members of the Grinnell community, to engage together and create art. The mural includes depictions of foods, places, and activities that I have cherished throughout my time at Grinnell. Over two weeks in mid-July, several dozens of community members (students, faculty, staff, and local families) contributed their time and effort to create the mural. The project has allowed me to experience the joy of inviting others to realize an artistic vision collaboratively and to consider the immense potential of harmony that can be fostered in the space of free expression that art provides. - Tommy G. Lee '22

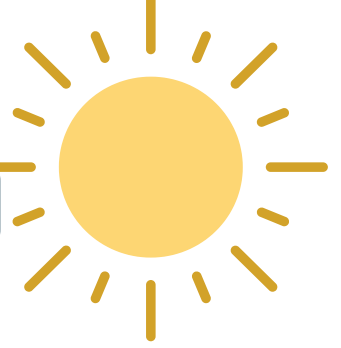
ARTIST'S NOTE

Tommy G. Lee '22
Seoul, South Korea



While developing this year's MOSAIC cover, I found myself coming back to the color scheme that I had used to create the "You Are Welcome Here" community mural at McNally's last summer. Grinnell is a place where the personalities, interests, and backgrounds of each individual merge to create a beautiful landscape. I selected these drawings in the hopes that they are able to celebrate the diversity and fluidity of our expressions in our community.

RARE BIRD REFLECTIONS



WHAT IS A RARE BIRD?

Rare Bird: *"a rare species with unusual characteristics and a free mind & spirit. A very awesome and cool animal."*

- Urban Dictionary

The OISA has coined the use of the phrase "Rare Birds" as a term of endearment for international Grinnellians who come from the smallest national cohorts on campus. We think you are brave, awesome, and very cool! :-)



GROS ISLET, ST. LUCIA



'25

Saint Lucia is a warm place. I mean that in both a literal and a figurative sense. Grinnell, on the other hand, seemed like it belonged to a cold and detached world. That was before I began learning about what it meant to be a Grinnellian. I expected to feel lonely, isolated from my peers who may not understand my cultural background. I thought that there would be constant pressure to assimilate to the culture(s) around me – after all, if you can't beat them (which I definitely couldn't, since 1 vs. ~1600 were not great odds), join them, right? Wrong! In my case,

standing out has been automatic, yet welcome – and it's that latter part that has made me comfortable at Grinnell. I see myself as a reminder to everyone on campus that there's someone else in the world who is different from them, but that it doesn't mean that we can't work together to achieve a common goal.

Being a "Rare Bird" has taught me that connections with other people are necessary; that getting to know them is just as important as them getting to know me; and that we should have our differences serve us by leading us to engage in more dialogue, to create more inclusive spaces, and to ask more questions instead of making judgements. These are lessons that I am happy to have learned this early in my time at Grinnell. Therefore, I am confident that, if I can thrive at Grinnell – a place where I supposedly have nothing in common with anyone, and yet have found so much in common with everyone around me – I can thrive anywhere. Here and now, I am creating a more global Grinnell, and by the time I leave, I will be a more global Grinnellian.





NAGALAND, INDIA

SOPHIE NEIKOU MERO



'22

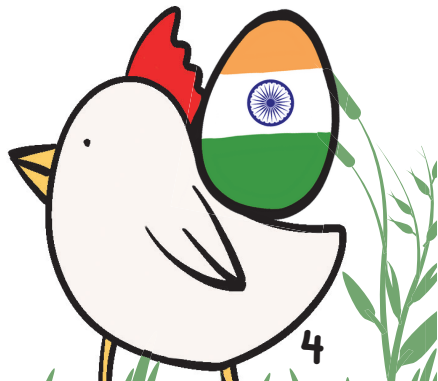
The world's imagination is correct in envisioning India as a vibrant and colorful country— this rightfully captures her immense diversity. The histories and livelihoods of tribal people in India (and globally) are unfortunately less well known, but I am happy to use this opportunity to share a glimpse into my homeland through MOSAIC. Cradling the ridge between mainland India and Myanmar, along with a few other states, is my home state, Nagaland.

Though it is not common knowledge, Nagaland played an important role in WW2— the event that led to Nagaland's statehood in India. The Battle of Kohima (the capital of Nagaland) in 1944 took place when the Japanese launched the U-Go offensive against the British Empire in India, where Nagaland was used as the battlefield for the two parties to fight for dominance. Following the British leaving India, Nagaland became the 16th state of India in 1963, despite the Nagas having little interaction with the surrounding populations.

The state is comprised of 17 major tribes and several sub-tribes. Every year in the first week of December, each tribe showcases its traditions and customs at the Hornbill Festival. During this festival, people come from all over the world to immerse themselves in Naga culture, traditions, and exciting music festivals.

If there is any news about Nagaland shared with the rest of the country, the state is often described as violent and politically unstable. This overblown and one-dimensional portrayal overshadows the beauty of the people and geography of Nagaland. It is filled with delicious cuisines (special shout-out to our Naga King Chili, which was once the world's spiciest), beautiful hills, many (extremely different) languages, folk tales, and traditional music. There is also a rich history yet to be discovered and shared with the rest of the world. Our ancestors are thought to have migrated from the South Yunnan (China) area, all the way to the edge of Southeast Asia. Interestingly, though today's Nagaland has no access to the sea, some of our traditional clothing and accessories are adorned with conches and seashells. Much of our history has been passed down orally, and in the olden days, young boys and girls would be sent to dormitories (for lack of a better word) and learn about our history, traditions, and build community—somewhat similar to summer camps for kids in the US. Though maintained in some secluded areas, due to modernization this tradition was mostly lost. However, in the recent years, efforts to revive older traditions has brought this practice back again.

My childhood is filled with memories of being immersed in nature and lively community gatherings where everyone would eagerly wait to hear stories from the elderly. I feel privileged to come from a unique heritage that has shaped who I am. I hope this highlights that we can celebrate the multitude of different ethnicities, languages, and experiences in the pursuit of unity.



AL AIN, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

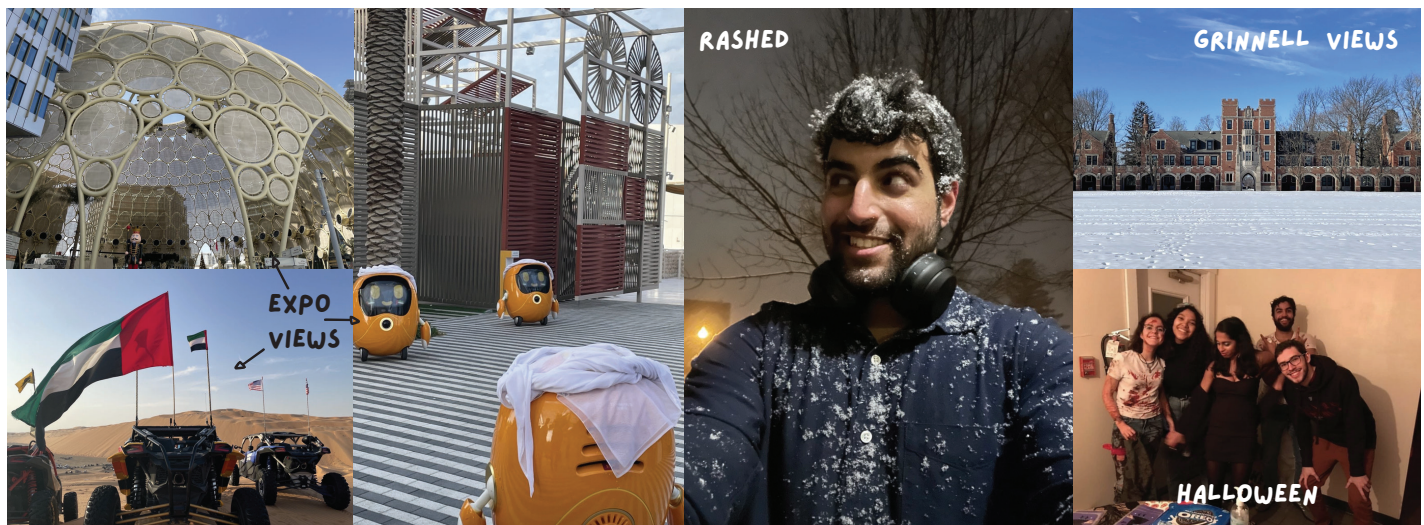


Ever heard of Dubai? Well... I don't exactly live there but I live close enough to it! I'm from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where 7 nations of the past, such as Dubai, united into one. As a high school student who lived near the capital, my hometown, Al Ain, has all you could ask for. Want an adrenaline rush? You can rent an ATV and drive around the sand dunes. Wanna have some extra thrill in your weekend? Bundle up for an indoor ski resort in Dubai, or go on a fishing and kayaking trip near the islands of Abu Dhabi! This year until the end of March 2022, you can grab tickets to Expo 2020 to visit 192 countries' pavilions which showcase their innovations, futuristic robots, and culture all in about 1,080 acres.

Despite all that UAE has to offer, I was always interested in studying in a large U.S. city where everything is around me -- in the middle of everywhere. Never have I thought that the strings of fate would pull me to Grinnell.

At first, I was overwhelmed by the fact that I wasn't at home anymore. I was about 7,400 miles away, and I felt it -- not many people speak Arabic like they did back home and no one was from the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council). From my experience of Grinnell, it wasn't a city that had "everything" in it. I was lost. I was homesick. I was a stranger. I was a rare bird.

As on-campus events and the semester rolled on, I mixed and matched with people from all the corners of Earth. Getting to know their cultures, beliefs, traditions, and hometowns really reminded me of memories I had of Al Ain. I also met other Arabs from Palestine, Jordan, and Egypt (all in total can be counted on your fingers). However, I slowly realized that Grinnell College offers something very different from what I had back at home: a small and connected community, where no one is a stranger.



RARE BIRD REFLECTIONS

BEIRUT, LEBANON



NICK EL HAJJ '24

I cannot express my excitement as I stepped out of the plane and onto the boarding bridge at the Beirut airport. I had been away from home for over a year now, studying on campus at Grinnell since January 2021. To me, Lebanon had become this exciting place that I miss so dearly and that is associated with so many of my cheerful memories. Yet, it had also become daunting in a strikingly distinct way. I had been away for so long that Lebanon had almost become this fictional land that I struggled to remember and imagine in my head. I felt both excited and lost. Will my parents still recognize me after I surprise them and show up at the door? Do I even remember the road home? Can I still understand the Lebanese way of giving directions? Actually, can anyone?

Lebanon is one of the smallest and oldest countries in the world, located in the northern MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. It is home to around 6 million people and five world heritage sites, including Baalbek (or Heliopolis/the Sun City). Some of the most spoken languages in Lebanon are Arabic, French, and English. It is filled with incredible and historical sites, beautiful landscapes, and most importantly -- my family and friends, so it was good to be home.

Stepping out of that plane reminded me of the story of a wide-eyed teen that left his home for the first time ever, said goodbye to his friends and family without knowing when he'll ever be back, and ventured off with very little to a fictional land he forever thought he was only meant to see from behind a television screen. It reminded me of the overwhelming excitement and dread that resounded through his body as he walked out onto that boarding bridge for the first time.

Yes, you guessed it. This teen was me, and for the first time, I was in the United States of America, or more precisely, Des Moines' tiny and underwhelming airport where you're charged five dollars for carts and apparently can't switch five one-dollar bills for a five-dollar bill. Anyways, I promise it didn't feel underwhelming then. I had finally accomplished something I had worked extremely hard towards and never thought possible.

Reflecting on these experiences and emotions got me thinking of the time my dad (aka my hero) told me: "ya bayye, kilna rah nmout bil ekher, fa lahe2 halak w 3ish hayetak talma fik" (written in the Modern Lebanese WhatsApp language, because to be honest, we have enough daily troubles and struggling to find Arabic letters on the keyboard is trouble we try to avoid). Translation: Son, we will all die eventually, so hurry up and live your life while you still can.

To me, the most unique thing about being Lebanese is valuing life and time. It's understanding that endless pursuits only leave you with nothing accomplished. It's understanding that the future is now, and no one knows what tomorrow may hold. It's understanding that compromising the present for the future is the same as burning a candle at both ends.

I truly believe that heaven is now. It is the depth of this very moment, and to see heaven one must first believe they are already in it.



OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS

Karen Edwards, Dean of International Student Affairs & Exchange Visitors

七転び八起き. FALL DOWN SEVEN TIMES, STAND UP EIGHT.

(Nanakorobi Yaoki)

- Japanese proverb

I was first introduced to the daruma as a child. Following a trip to Japan, my grandmother delivered a small box filled with tiny colorful oval creatures - a tourist's replica of the larger traditional paper-mache 'good luck charm.' My awareness of daruma recently re-emerged, when a student gifted me a slightly larger version. It was a timely gift and an inspiration to lean into the tradition of setting goals and looking forward.

The OISA is also in the midst of setting goals and looking forward. We've had limited capacity to plan in recent years (it feels like we've been drinking from a fire hose since December 2020) - but like everyone else, we need to regroup and refresh. It is an exciting opportunity! As we "paint in" the left eye of the daruma, we re-center our goal to help international students thrive. Numerous priorities have emerged...

Our primary focus is to prioritize immigration and other regulatory teaching, advising, and compliance requirements for F & J visa holders. OISA staff dedicate about 50% of our time toward this essential work - in support of current students, exchange visitors, alumni working in the U.S. with practical training benefits, and institutional compliance at large.

The OISA will continue to offer support or referral to enhance academic success and help students navigate systemic and social/cultural transitions. In addition, we will work to enhance belonging and cultural learning opportunities. For example, we hope to revitalize Friends of International Students (FIS) as a meaningful opportunity to enhance friendships across culture,



Daruma's eyes are intentionally unpainted. The owner can paint one eye as they set a goal, wish, or promise to fulfill. They must work towards the goal, and once it is accomplished, they may paint the other eye. Daruma dolls offer cultural significance to the ganbaru spirit - the ability to persevere.

language, generation, and experience. We also hope to regularize our Friday afternoon "Middle of Everywhere" program, which was launched last fall (read title, on page 16).

Embracing the principles of universal design, it is an aspiration for the OISA to help build campus wide fluency about the unique journey of international Grinnellians. Every campus function plays a role in creating an international-student-friendly environment, and we will continue to initiate regular visits with campus partners to facilitate focused conversations about responding to student needs and our shared work.

Daruma dolls are often associated with the New Year, setting a goal, wish, or promise to fulfill in the year to come. The OISA's goal to support international students well presents an ever-evolving, longer-term pursuit. In truth, because we might never fully finish the task. **We might not ever "paint-in" the second eye, but the most valuable part of this beautiful tradition is working toward the goal every single day.**

THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN F-1 STUDENT

(Adapted from International Student Life Cycle, studyinthestates.dhs.gov)

1. APPLICATION, ADMISSION, & I-20 REQUEST

Grinnell receives 5,000+ international applications per year. Students submit high school transcripts, references, and English scores. Admitted students who commit to Grinnell must provide evidence of liquid assets for year one + evidence of financial sustainability for all four years -- after which the OISA can issue the I-20.

2. \$350 SEVIS FEE & \$160 VISA FEE.

Students submit the SEVIS fee and make a visa appointment. At the U.S. Consulate interview they present their I-20; fee receipts; Passport; funding documents, & confirm their non-immigrant intent.

3. ARRIVAL

Students present documents at the Port of Entry and the OISA records campus arrival in SEVIS.

5. WHILE ENROLLED AT GRINNELL...

The OISA confirms full-time enrollment and registers students in SEVIS at the start of each term. We also use the Real Time Interface to report address, biographical, financial, and academic data along with benefit notifications &/or applications.

The OISA teaches & advises students about document maintenance, border crossing, employment limitations & practical training benefits, and enrollment options and restrictions. We also advise & refer on cultural adjustment and learning; academic success; and navigating systems (health care, banking, legal referrals, cell phones, insurance, etc.). OISA assists with Social Security Card and REAL ID applications, and Tax compliance via Glacier Tax Prep.

6. AFTER GRADUATING...

F-1 seniors must either: depart the U.S.; release their SEVIS record to a new school; or apply to remain on Grinnell's SEVIS role to use one year of post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) to work in their major field. Those with designated STEM majors may seek two additional years of STEM OPT.

Alumni who are employed through OPT and STEM OPT maintain F-1 status, and the OISA retains responsibility for their SEVIS reporting and compliance. Those working with STEM OPT must retain and submit updated I-983 training plans throughout their authorization.

Once OPT or STEM OPT ends, the alum will either close their affairs and leave the U.S.; ask the OISA to release their SEVIS record to a graduate program; or seek employer or family based sponsorship.

**OFFICE OF
INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT AFFAIRS**



INTERNATIONAL ADMISSION

Grace Robertson-Lloyd '16, Senior Assistant Director of Admission & Coordinator of Virtual Recruitment



RECRUITING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

It's 3:45 a.m. on a Thursday. Coffee is brewing. The shock of a morning shower makes it feel like 7 a.m., but the sky is still dark, the morning cold, and everything is silent. All the artificial bulbs in the living room are turned on to imitate daylight, and the blue glow of the computer screen makes me squint. While sipping coffee and rubbing sleep from my eyes, I click "Start Meeting" on Zoom.

Sometimes, a flood of students join the waiting room within minutes of hitting the start button. There can be so many questions over the next three hours that my fellow presenter and I's voices are hoarse by the end, feeling more tired than when we first woke up. Other times, no one joins. Three hours might pass with no visitors, or just one or two. Our videos turn off, waiting for the doorbell of someone entering—which may never come. It can be demoralizing when that happens, but it's impossible to predict. We'll try again next time.

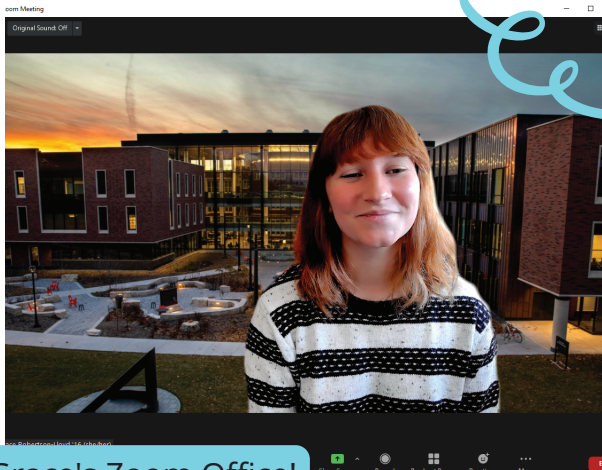
Time zone differences do not provide a lot of mercy to those navigating them. Nonetheless, we still need to engage with each other – and the Grinnell community

rose to the occasion. Our engagement required international Grinnellians, across the world, tuning in at midnight to their class in Iowa (where it's 10 AM CT); and it involved Jon Edwards and I, in the Office of Admission in Iowa, attempting to spread the good word on Grinnell to students across the world. You might go to bed at 6 PM, so you still get the sleep you need -- or you stay up and pass out at 2 AM after you click "Leave Meeting". This is the reality of living, studying, and working internationally during the pandemic. The value, however, of meeting virtually with students for interviews, college fairs, high school presentations, and panels is undeniable, especially when in-person connections are impossible.

While virtual admission recruitment has challenges, it also opens doors for students from regions that were previously not possible to visit. One can't be in two places at once; with in-person travel, that fair in India wasn't possible to attend while I was in Japan and Jon was in Brazil. Choices had to be made. Now, with virtual recruitment, we can jump from Beijing to Tbilisi in a few hours. While sleep deprivation is unmitigable, the flexibility is incredible.

It was an incredible shift for prospective students, too. Suddenly, missing the only in-person visit of the year from Grinnell's Office of Admission in your home city is not as big a concern, because Grinnell will be "back" - virtually - in a couple of weeks.

The numbers don't lie: during Grinnell's first year of virtual recruitment, virtual events held internationally doubled in attendance, and the number of international interviews conducted increased by more than 200%.



Grace's Zoom Office!

This huge rise in international student attendance at interviews and events proves that virtual recruitment can bridge gaps in access for students around the world. Sure, waking up before the sun has risen can mess with your internal clock, and perhaps the caffeine intake was unnaturally large during those months of virtual recruitment. But it's worth it for that doorbell sound in Zoom, and the smile of a student who otherwise would not be capable of being "face-to-face" with an admission counselor from Grinnell.



JON EDWARDS



MELINDA DREES



GRACE ROBERTSON-LLOYD '16

INTERNATIONAL
ADMISSIONS
TEAM

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A
FIRST-YEAR INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
(DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC)



One year ago, today, on the date I write this, it was my first-time seeing snow. It was my first time travelling alone. It was my first time living on my own. And it was the first time I set foot in Cowles Hall. Cowles is central to my story, because when you go to college during a pandemic, your residence hall becomes your everyday: your groggy 8:00 AMs, your dinner table, your study hall, and your Friday night outings. Though I spent my first semester attending virtual classes from my home in Honduras, I and 30 other international students arrived on Grinnell's campus in January 2021 for our spring semester, building community in residence halls like Cowles. This hall became my home, and it is where I found my family at Grinnell.

Andrea and her Amigos Group during her IPOP Check-In in January 2021



So, what does it mean to be an international first-year student during a pandemic? It means spending your first semester stressing over online school and visa issues. It means spending your first few days on campus awkwardly waiting for your food in a packed, face masked and silent lounge, while trying to recognize anyone from online classes. It means being told by your IPOP mentors how awesome "actual" IPOP is, about Harris and Gardner parties, concerts,

and all sorts of traditions -- but never experiencing any of them. It means late night walks to Kum & Go as the only exciting thing to do on our weekends. And it means being a separated, fractured, class. **Because you see, only 30 other students and I share this story.**

What about the other half or so who couldn't make it? What does it mean to be an international first-year student during a pandemic for them? It means visa issues or travel bans delaying your arrival to campus until August 2021 -- forced to take online classes your whole first year. It means that every connection you make in college lives eternally on the internet. Even this does not encompass the whole class; the pandemic has caused us all to have major differences, different arrival times, different experiences, making it hard to recognize who are the same year as us. As I reflect on the experience I had one year ago, I am saddened that I was not able to share it with more of the people I've met since then.

Coming back to a fully in-person campus this year was overwhelming. A packed dining hall, a million events on the weekends, transportation off campus, and so many other big things that made it feel like I was a first-year again. But, the biggest change was being able to see the faces of all my international classmates. If you look at the IPOP 2020 class photo, you'll see about half the faces you would usually see in a normal IPOP class photo. Despite missing some of our classmates, the day this picture was taken was such a huge step in reuniting this fractured class. It felt like a class reunion, where we all knew each other and had faint memories of each other from somewhere but can't quite place it. I remember seeing people and thinking, "I know you from somewhere -- I know you're from this country, had this class together, met in online IPOP... but we haven't formally met yet, so should I pretend I don't know you?" Despite the awkwardness, it was exciting to see the community I was a part of, one that understood the unique struggles of being an international first-year during a pandemic.

This year hasn't been the easiest for building connections with my IPOP class, especially with our established friendships from last year. Despite that, most of us have managed

to get to know each other in classrooms, multicultural events, parties, and even the dining hall -- much better places for establishing connections than a laggy zoom call. We've exchanged stories of our arrivals to Grinnell, invited friends of friends of friends to hangouts to get to know each other, and talked about how weird it is to be second years despite the lack of knowledge we have of Grinnell culture. And it has been fun to do so -- building connections like how we were meant to when a virus wasn't spreading around the world. At this point, it's hard to feel disconnected from our class year.

Living through an online first year was hard, frustrating, and isolating. But this experience has only made us special, unique, and stronger than we would have thought before. It is a shared experience that can only bring us together and will continue to do so. I know that if we have a class reunion in maybe 20 or 50 years, our experiences as first years during a pandemic will be something we will still talk about.

Class of 2024 Friends



Window Views when stuck inside in January 2021



MESSAGE FROM MENTORS -> MENTEES

"I'm so incredibly grateful to have met all of you this year! You're all fantastic additions to the Grinnell community, and we are lucky to have you here. I hope that you continue to feel at home in Grinnell and grow to be even more amazing people. Good luck!" 😊

- Antonella Diaz Rodriguez

"So proud of our diverse and sweet team! I'm impressed by how fast you adapted to a new environment and shared your talents during all kinds of activities during IPOP. Please keep bringing your enthusiasm and wisdom to your peers and our Grinnell community!"

- Huandong Chang

"IPOP was such a memorable start, but it's only the beginning - the next 3 years are yours to conquer! Go forth and make us all proud."

- Shubhi Devrani

"Get on a sleep schedule!"

- Isidro Mendizabal



"Hiiii! You are the most awesome and cutest mentees, and I hope you have the best Grinnell journey" ♡

- Kexin (Sherry) Huang

"It was a pleasure serving as a mentor and getting to know you all throughout the semester. I wish you all the best during your time at Grinnell!"

- Shirley Jwa

"Thank you for being wonderful mentees - it's been a pleasure getting to know you all. Just as Grinnell shapes you, you shape Grinnell, and you've already added so much to the community!"

- Rachael Arkell

"I hope your first year has been going better than expected! Grinnell has a lot to offer. Continue doing your best while having fun here at Grinnell."

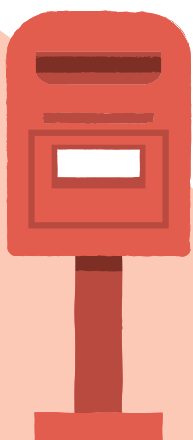
- Ariel Richards

"I hope last semester was not too demanding, that you had a wonderful winter break, and that every one of you will have a great semester this spring!"

- Xinmiao (Austin) Yu

"I am so happy that I got to mentor such an amazing group. Y'all were awesome! I hope each of you make great memories in the rest of your college journey, and I'm wishing you all good luck!"

- Rei Yamada





FIRST DAY



IPOP 2021

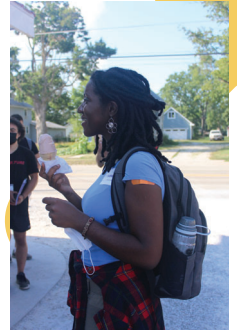


SCAVENGER HUNT!



GIFT EXCHANGE

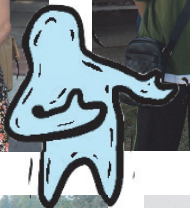




DARI BARN



FIS HOSTS <3



ALLPOP AT THE GOLF COURSE



THE GOLDEN RETRIEVER

One watches her life with dazzling city
One found it absurd
But nothing matters...
It doesn't matter that nothing matters
Absurdity impossible to avoid
Thoughts cannot be controlled
And air is the air cannot be inhaled
Nothing here, nor there, Spotify 24/7
A silent deluge of water.

A horizon, and horizons beyond
One sleepwalking, in the Arctic
One becoming a sculpture
Clinging to sinking icebergs
Decaying among the ghosts of British sailors
Homeless, restless
Without waking, without sleeping

Wake up. Wake up.
Comes a golden retriever
Pulls back the curtain
Chase out the sticky fogs
A fresh wind blowing
It's all a bad dream.

The perils of intimacy
The paralyzing freedom
Quick flash of heat, violent drum beats
I resist, I deny, I refuse
Hug, hug, hug me please!
No, no, never come too close!
I'm covered with thorns

The golden retriever never moves
Melts the thorn of ice
Bare skin shining light of rebirth
Terror the love's aftermath
Can I be on my own? Absolutely
Sways the dim reflections





MIDDLE OF EVERYWHERE ...

The return to in-person classes in Fall 2021 was a source of joy, but also a source of anxiety for some. Our sense of "community" was seriously interrupted by online learning and COVID limitations. For many second year international students, Fall 2021 marked their first time on campus, since they began their college career online from home. Many third and fourth year students were returning following a long absence -- from online classes across the globe, study abroad programs, or personal leaves. Others had remained here in Grinnell throughout the pandemic, but in isolated and highly stressful conditions. Most of us felt like Fall 2021 provided a completely new social and communal scene that was challenging to navigate.

One of the OISA's priorities is to help students feel at home in Grinnell, through programming and relationship building, and Fall 2021 offered a unique challenge and a new opportunity to build on some of our Cultural Attaché programming. We wanted to help bridge the COVID community gap, in a small way.

Things kicked off in late October, as students were invited to offer Friday afternoon "Middle of Everywhere" presentations in the HSSC Global Living Room -- to share some aspect of their home country and culture with their friends at Grinnell. Topics have ranged from food to music, politics to sports, and language to pop culture. The presentations have provided a time for presenting students to invite their friends and familiar faculty or staff to come learn about the place they love and feel passionate about in a casual and relaxing setting. Middle of Everywhere sessions are advertised campus wide, too, so there is also the chance to meet new friends as well.

Starting with the first three presentations (Nepal, Lebanon, and Nigeria), the gathering was popular and the audience was engaged. This led to a full docket of students, filling every Friday from January to early May. Presentations range from Thai language to English fetes, Nepali and Indonesian tourism, and hidden gems in Pakistan. We can't wait to see what topics we'll learn about next!

2021-22 PRESENTATIONS

- OCTOBER 29** Meghna Adhikari '24 - Nepal
- NOVEMBER 5** Nick El Hajj '24 - Lebanon
- NOVEMBER 19** Oluwatobi Alabi '24 - Nigeria
- FEBRUARY 4** Sun Yuvachitti '24 - Thailand
- FEBRUARY 11** Mario Manalu '22 - Indonesia
- FEBRUARY 18** Kexin Huang '22 - China
- MARCH 4** Andrea Suazo '24 - Honduras
- MARCH 11** Muhammad Faheem '24 - Pakistan
- APRIL 8** Shrey Agrawal '24 - Nepal
- APRIL 15** Ariel Dyché '24 - Jamaica
- APRIL 22** Rachael Arkell '22 - England
- APRIL 29** Mitsuru Watanabe '24 - Japan
- MAY 6** Diana Chege '22 - Kenya



EXHIBITION: WINTER IN VIENNA



13:00



cafe



quick smoke



way back home

Vienna, Austria was like a dream: Baroque style buildings lining the streets; Short cream colored trams running at the center of the road; St. Stephen's Cathedral tower in the sky. In contrast to this historic and Christianity influenced look, Korean, Taiwan, and Turkish restaurants occupied those buildings. The architecture was beautiful and the culture, diverse. But the most prized experience in Vienna was meeting Japanese people who lived there.





Yellow Church



Baker

A ballet pianist working in the Vienna State Opera, a violin fourth year major at Wien University, a twenty year old visual designer... I had never met a group of people so passionate about art. In fact, the whole city of Vienna valued art and music at a level I had never seen before. I found that being an artist or musician was not looked at as a financially unstable job but something to be proud of and even normal. No one seemed to question the value or role of art and music in comparison to technology or politics like I, with embarrassment, do sometimes. It made me rethink my attitude towards art. My month in Vienna was a priceless learning experience.



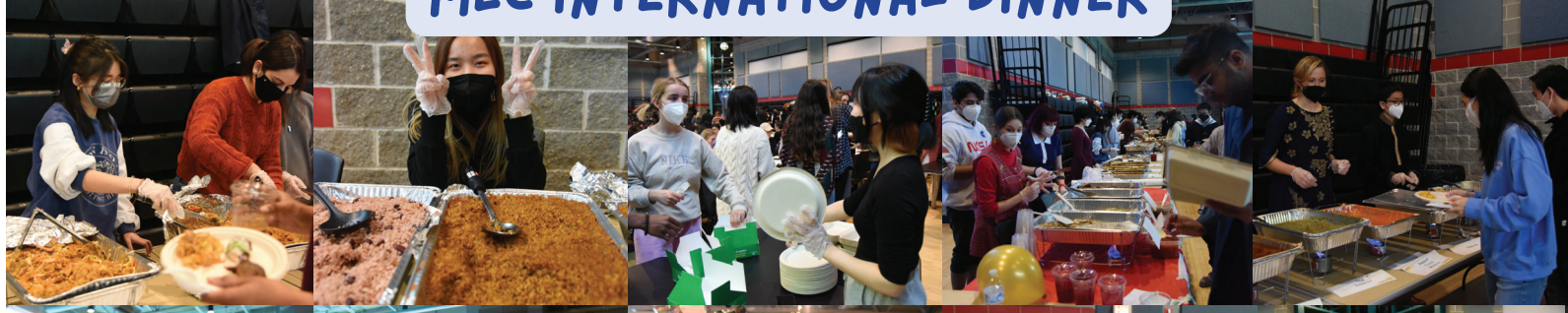
16:00



2021 ISO FOOD BAZAAR



MLC INTERNATIONAL DINNER



CULTURAL ORGS AT GRINNELL

Grinnell's campus is coming back to life after over a year of online classes and community building; the new life and programming is partly thanks to the work of our campus student organizations. Here's a spotlight on a few campus cultural orgs to celebrate the community they build and how they've approached programming in the 2021-22 school year.

AAA: ASIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION **AAA@GRINNELL.EDU**

AAA serves to establish a space for those who identify as Asian American to find a community with those of similar background and experiences. We hold weekly discussions regarding the Asian American identity, pop culture, and global events, and program for events such as the yearly AAA Potluck and the Meet & Greet with Asian/Asian American Faculty.

ACSU: AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDENT UNION **ACSU@GRINNELL.EDU**

The African and Caribbean Student Union seeks to celebrate the rich diversity of the African diaspora by engaging the Grinnell community through education, community, and dialogue, coordinate activities with multicultural peer organizations, and serve as a home-away-from-home for international Africans, Caribbean students, black Americans and all students with interest in the efforts and values of ACSU.

BRASA: BRAZILIAN STUDENTS ORGANIZATION **BRASA@GRINNELL.EDU**

Brasa is an organization that empowers the next generation of future leaders to create a better life for Brazilian population. It is the biggest organization of Brazilian students studying abroad, present in more than 90 universities, spread through more than 50 countries all over the world. We connect and support each other on the challenges that we face in common! In the Brasa at Grinnell, we value creating a sense of belonging and community, while also celebrating our culture and sharing it with other students.

CBS: CONCERNED BLACK STUDENTS **CBS@GRINNELL.EDU**

We as Concerned Black Students want to provide a community within all cultures, as a way to unite and strengthen diversity amongst ALL Grinnellians. As a subunit of the intercultural community here at Grinnell College, we plan to educate, raise awareness, and ultimately create a safe haven for black students and those who support black students.

CHINESE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (CSA) **CSA@GRINNELL.EDU**

CSA strives to enrich campus diversity and enhance cross-cultural understanding by organizing a diversity of Chinese cultural events and activities, including Chinese New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival, for a wide audience! This year, 2022, we have already held Lunar New Year gala collaborating with other student organizations. Fantastic performances from talented Grinnell students and the traditional Chinese snacks made it an unforgettable night for us.

EUROPEAN HORIZONS **GRINNELL@EUROPEANHORIZONS.ORG**

Our organization holds discussion panels and meetings about Transatlantic affairs and international relations. The organization is a part of a larger student-led policy incubator (with the same name); through which we are able to connect with experts who have worked in the field. We recently held a discussion panel on the war in Ukraine where four international students from the region spoke about their experiences with Russian aggression. We are soon planning to attend a European Horizons chapter summit at Yale university. At the summit we will attend a discussion pannel on the war in Ukraine as well as talks held by the alumni of the organization about career development.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORGANISATION (ISO)

ISO@GRINNELL.EDU

ISO celebrates the cultural diversity in the Grinnell community. This year, we brought back Food Bazaar where students share culture through food, and planned events that brought the community back together after COVID.

JAPANESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION (JCA)

JCA@GRINNELL.EDU

The JCA is a student organization that welcomes anyone who is related to or loves Japan! This year, we have enjoyed sharing Japanese food when the COVID-19 policies allowed us to hold such events and during the International Dinner. We also look forward to holding the Japanese Spring Festival this April!

KOREAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION (KSA)

KSA@GRINNELL.EDU

KSA is a cultural club designed to create a sense of community for those who identify with the Korean diaspora, as well as to share Korean culture with the campus. KSA has collaborated with multiple other student organizations in the planning of the International Dinner, Lunar New Year Festival, and more. We are an active community both in person through monthly snack breaks as well as in our online community on discord.

GRINNELL QUESTBRIDGE SCHOLARS NETWORK (QSN)

GRINNELL.CHAPTER@QUESTBRIDGE.ORG

The Grinnell QuestBridge Scholars Chapter serves as a safe space and community for low-income and first-generation and/or QuestBridge affiliated identifying students in the Grinnell community. We host events that are open to the whole campus and give Questies the opportunity to make connections with each other. Some events that we have done so far this academic year include: a field trip to Uncle Bill's Farm, a Fall Festival, QuestGiving, Secret Santa/Winter Event, QB/Low-Income/First-Gen Student and Alumni Meet Up, Valentine's Arts and Crafts Event, Make Your Own Slime Event, and more to come! We actively create events that cater to the QuestBridge community interests and make sure to create a space where participants can be their most authentic selves and feel celebrated.

SOUTH ASIAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION (SASO)

SASO@GRINNELL.EDU

SASO is another multicultural organization that strives to promote understanding, respect and representation for all South Asian cultures, especially those cultures that have been historically marginalized and underrepresented at Grinnell College. Through chai times, festivals, and the support of other multicultural groups on campus, we aim to provide a safe space for students to connect with each other and build a home away from home. Some of our events include Diwali, Holi, Id and Ramadan, where students are able to showcase a variety of performances, eat delicious authentic food, and celebrate our identities and backgrounds as international students with each other!

STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF LATINX (SOL)

SOL@GRINNELL.EDU

SOL is dedicated to bringing students of Latin American heritage together to find community within each other, and within the greater Grinnell area. We are committed to the deep cultural roots we share, and the diversity within them. We stand together to celebrate our similarities and our differences, as we equally challenge the injustices that globally face our community and other minoritized communities.

VIETNAMESE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (VSA)

VSA@GRINNELL.EDU

Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) aims to promote a sense of belonging and community among students with a Vietnamese background and create a space for people interested in Vietnamese culture to come together and gain more cultural experiences. VSA achieves these aims through a wide range of activities that include monthly gatherings, study breaks, semesterly Vietnamese food events, screenings of Vietnamese films, and rehearsals for performances at the annual International Student Organization Cultural Evenings.

BUILDING COMMUNITY OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

ORG FAIR!



Grinnell can be a very chaotic place. Deadlines to meet, readings to do, quizzes to study. But in the midst of the academic rigor we all signed up for, we find an incredible diversity of extracurricular projects to join--specially considering we are a 1700 students school. As an international student from Brazil, I was always impressed by the ability of engaging in the school community outside the classroom. At home, the norm is to stay in school only to attend classes, and the

earlier you leave the better. At Grinnell, I invite you to explore. Look at all the different jobs posted on Handshake, participate in your professor's research or personal project, run for senator or to be an SEPC. Those can be life changing experiences, and Grinnell is a great place to start.

During my first year here, I tried going to every meeting I could find. I would start the week virtually meeting alums at the Student Alumni Council, move to finding myself at home at the Student Organization of Latinxs, and finish by carving a gift-spoon to my brother at Spoon Carving. At Grinnell, I felt free to engage with multiple things and navigate among many different groups of people. By participating in student groups, you get the chance of not only making friends but also learning some new skill--be it practical like knitting or playing badminton or intellectual like developing a computer software for a community business.

On SGA's website (sga.grinnell.edu) you can find a list of our almost 100 student groups and their descriptions. If you don't find anything that interests you or you decide to take on the challenge and create a group, you may also go through the rolling student group registration process. You need to decide whether you want to lead a club or an organization (details are clarified during registration), and if you choose to create a club you need is a secondary

contact information and a description. Every student group is eligible for funding, and that's one of the easiest and most straight-forward ways of making the student activity fee you deposit every semester pay off. I truly believe that during college you are in the right place and time to try out different things, learn, and meet people, and I am excited to see where this can lead us.



PHOTOS FROM BRASA



GLOBAL KITCHEN

David Stanley, Global Kitchen Culinary Coordinator



I have had the privilege of working with and supervising Grinnell College students since moving to Grinnell from Chicago over four years ago. After living and working in such a culturally diverse city, I was a little concerned about the move. I thought coming to the prairie would kind of be the end of the “melting pot” experience that I had in Chicago. I was wrong about that!

In my new role as Global Kitchen Culinary Coordinator for the Institute for Global Engagement, not only do I work with students, faculty, and staff from all over the world, I get to eat their food as well! Roughly 300 students and faculty have cooked, taught, and shared ideas during Fall 2021. There have been close to 20 countries represented, with regional cuisines from several of the larger countries represented on campus like China and India. Because of this, I have seen firsthand how a space like the Marcus Family Global Kitchen can educate, spark conversations, and bring people together.

Food is essential for life on a basic level. The creating and sharing of it means so much more. It can remind you of a family member you might miss. It can bring back memories of a special occasion or holiday. Food can also be a way to bring a bit of home to a place that may be thousands of miles away.

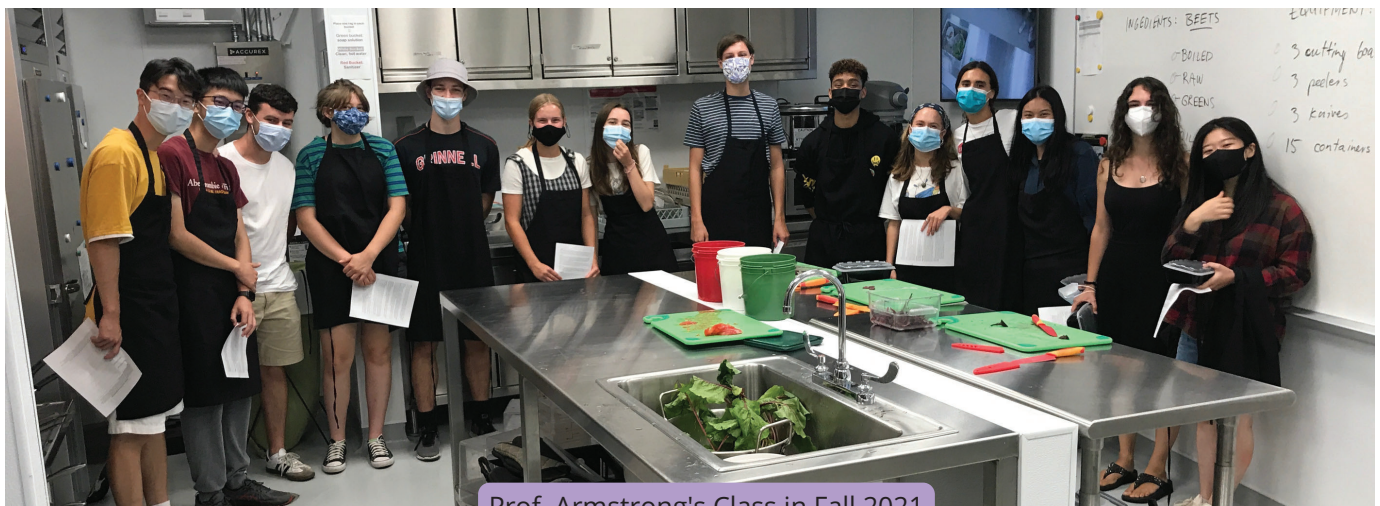


David Stanley, Todd Armstrong, and the Global Kitchen Peer Mentors featured on the TV screen.

I am fortunate that my path in life has brought me to this campus and the job I currently I have. Part of the position entails supervising an awesome team of five Global Kitchen Peer Mentors (Jane Hoffman, Nora Leahy, Priyanka Dangol, Sophie Mero, and Trinisa Fung) who have embraced our mission and have made my job even more enjoyable. Most of the time, it doesn't feel like work. I see and smell and taste great food coming out of my “office” when the Global Kitchen is being used.

My favorite part of the Global Kitchen is hearing the laughter and joy that students share when they are cooking and learning together. One of the best examples from the fall semester was the ISO Food Bazaar. Several teams of student chefs used the kitchen to make food from their home countries and share it with other Grinnell students. At one point, I opened the fridge and saw an amazing array of ingredients, anything from feta cheese to pickled bamboo shoots. I was also impressed with the pride and excitement that students felt about sharing their creations with their peers.

Quote from Laura Esquivel, author of *Water for Chocolate*: “Cooking is one of the strongest ceremonies for life. When recipes are put together, the kitchen is a chemical laboratory involving air, fire, water and the earth. This is what gives value to humans and elevates their spiritual qualities. If you take a frozen box and stick it in the microwave, you become connected to the factory.”



Prof. Armstrong's Class in Fall 2021

In the challenging return to in-person classes, the Marcus Family Global Kitchen helped us recreate the close-knit community we've all missed so much during the pandemic. As Maddie Beltramo '25 noted, our work in the kitchen also “added a whole new dimension to learning about Soviet culture. It added play, joy, and a feeling of giddiness to class, which is rare, especially in a high stress academic environment.” It was an amazing semester!



Todd Armstrong, Professor of Russian & Global Kitchen Coordinator



Karen & Jon Edwards, with students making wontons over Winter Break '22

WINTER BREAK IN GRINNELL



Byron Cabrera, Spanish Language Teaching Assistant

こんにちは! ¡Hola! Hello! I am Byron Cabrera, from Ecuador. It's a pleasure. Although the change of rules and regulations might be somewhat overwhelming for all of us, I hope we all are getting used to our return to Grinnell this semester. I was one of the people that stayed in campus during 2021 Winter Break, and I have to say that it was fun! Despite the surrounding and recurring calmness and tranquility. A bunch of events were scheduled for the small group that remained on campus, including karaoke, a global trivia night, sledding on Hamburger Hill, and a trip to Coralridge Mall in Coralville! This of course, allowed for new friends to be made.



Byron and others at CLIC's Global Trivia Night during break

I always say that Ecuador is “evergreen”, in the sense that it is not possible to visibly notice the seasons change. I am glad that Grinnell is the place where I experienced a cold and snowy winter for my first time. Although I am more than 20 years old, I felt like a little child, excited by the light of the sun reflecting on the white snow scattered all over the place. Sometimes I imagine the winter as an Oreo Cookie: The snow being the white cream, and the ground being the chocolate cookie. If only snow were sweet, I would eat it all and repeat! 😊

The interesting combinations of places, people, cultures and situations that happened during my Winter Break were illuminating. During a Karaoke Night with the International Student Organization (ISO), some Chinese friends were singing a song in French, a song that I remember that my brother was listening to back in my country: Chinese students in Grinnell, singing a French song that I have heard in Ecuador. Similarly, I'm a person from Ecuador, who speaks Spanish, English and a little bit of Japanese, teaching Spanish in the United States and taking classes in Japanese. These firsthand experiences made me think about globalization and how people move around the world, taking their languages and cultures with them. I think that if I had returned to Ecuador during the Winter Break, I might have lost the chance to have this realization. I am glad I stayed at Grinnell College during the Winter Break, an opportunity that allowed me to deeply connect and have fun with friends from all over the world.

I felt nervous before coming to the United States on August 2021. I was thinking that there was no use for a person like me who can use Spanish, English and Japanese. However, thanks to the Grinnell community, I was granted a rewarding opportunity to challenge myself in sharing Spanish and my culture with a global community, as well as connecting with people from all around the world. I want to become a bridge that links different cultures and worldviews in mutual understanding. That is one of the reasons I enjoy teaching, and Grinnell provides a kind and friendly environment for that!

Feel free to say hello in Japanese, English or Spanish may we see each other around the campus! I wish you an excellent Spring 2022 semester! またね〜! ¡Nos vemos! See you around! 😊

CENTER FOR LANGUAGES AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Anastasia Izmaylova, Director of CLIC



WHAT IS A LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER?

I joined Grinnell College in August 2021, just a few weeks before students arrived on campus. Some students were returning after learning remotely for a while, and others were coming to Grinnell for the first time. In a way, I felt just like these students – unsure where some buildings are, not knowing many people, learning a lot at once. When I represented the Language Learning Center at the new students and new faculty orientations, many people asked me the same question: *So, what is a language learning center?*



CLIC's new hub in HSSC N1161!

While the Language Learning Center (LLC) was established a few years ago, the vacancy in its directorship and the remote learning put its activity largely on pause for over a year. This gave me the advantage of building on my predecessor's success with flexibility to envision the future of the center. One of my most important goals was to make a clear connection between the LLC and Grinnell's global learning goals. This includes not only the ability to speak multiple languages, but also a certain level of intercultural competence that enables students to understand and navigate cultures other than their own. To highlight the inextricable link between culture and language, and to reinforce our vision of becoming the hub for multilingual and multicultural communication, the LLC was renamed as Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication (CLIC).

This year, CLIC has been working to support and promote language and culture learning in various ways, such as coordinating peer tutoring, directing the Alternate Language Study Option (ALSO), providing language and culture programming, and supporting the foreign language teaching assistants.

Peer Tutoring: CLIC offers regular peer tutoring sessions in collaboration with the language departments.

WHAT'S CLIC BEEN UP TO IN 2021-2022?

Language & Culture Events: CLIC offered a range of events this year, including: "Trick-o-Treat" with Peer Tutors, International Education Week Collaboration with the Global Kitchen, Global Trivia Night with OISA, and an International Cartoon Night.

Alternate Language Study Option (ALSO): Provides students to study languages not taught by Grinnell faculty. The program combines independent language learning with regular speaking sessions with a native speaking peer tutor. In 2021-22, students had the opportunity to learn:

- Italian
- Urdu
- Brazilian Portuguese
- Korean
- Tagalog (Filipino)
- American Sign Language (ASL)

New Space: In Spring 2022, CLIC got its own space in the HSSC! With comfy chairs, tables, and computers, the new center can be a space for language and culture learning, peer tutoring, informal gatherings, and multilingual game nights.

2021-2022 FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Grinnell's language departments bring Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) each year. These are native speakers who teach part-time and also take courses part-time. Language assistants help students practice oral, listening, reading, and writing skills. 2021-22 FLTAs teach in the Arabic, German, Russian, and Spanish departments and come from Egypt, Germany, Russia, and Ecuador.

I was honored to be invited back to Grinnell for a second year! I feel so lucky and blessed to have the opportunity to return to campus, and coming back to in-person classes is an experience in itself. Seeing my students after an entire semester of virtual classes brought so much joy to my heart. Finally, the drive back to Grinnell after being gone for almost five months was so thrilling as it felt like I was headed back home!



I am studying American Studies and wanted to get a firsthand experience of the country that I learned so much about. I could have never imagined going to the Midwest, let alone Iowa. However, when the college offered me the job, I answered the call without hesitation, driven by the motivation to get to know the real USA. Being in Grinnell for one semester now, I've really learned to love this place. The people from my department could not have been more courteous and I feel more confident in my role as a German language assistant every day. In my position, I teach the supportive German labs, give office hours every week, and help organize extracurricular events. Finally, I have found it fascinating to observe Grinnell as I shift between teacher and student; it is a surreal, liberal, an isolated world from the state of Iowa. All of this is fascinating to me and my position, and I'm looking forward to the rest of the Spring 2022 Semester!



2021-2022 FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

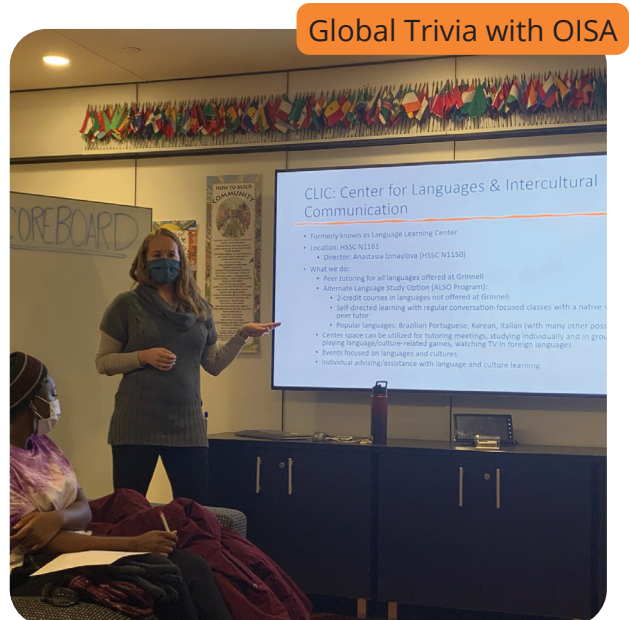
Hello everyone! This is my second time in Grinnell and I'm very glad to be back! The first time I was here before the pandemic, and I went home to Irkutsk (Russia) in March 2020. Grinnell has changed a bit, but I think that there is nothing wrong with that. Moreover, it is always interesting to adapt to new conditions; this is a very good professional and life experience. I have been a professional teacher of Russian as a foreign language since 2016. It seems to me that this is the most interesting job in the world, and I always look forward to the lessons with my students. I like teaching Russian, introducing people to Russian culture and showing that Russians are cool guys. Over the years, I have worked in three countries: Russia, the Netherlands and the USA with people from different parts of the world. It's so great that now, thanks to my work, I have friends in almost all countries of the world, and we are all united by the love for the Russian language.



¡Hola! Hello! I've always felt curiosity for languages. Since I was a kid, I got motivated to learn English when I wanted to understand videogames that were only in English at that time. My next step was studying abroad in Oregon. It was an exciting opportunity to reinforce my English skills in a real environment. This first time abroad made me reconstruct the way I understood the world. Now, Grinnell College granted me the rewarding opportunity to return to the USA in Fall 2021. Reconnecting with people from all around the world, becoming a bridge that links different cultures and worldviews, is one of the reasons I enjoy teaching. I am happy to share my cultural experiences the best I can, so don't be afraid to talk to me anytime about anything in Japanese, English, Spanish, or even your own language! 😊



International Cartoon Night



Global Trivia with OISA

Following a tremendously challenging period for education abroad since COVID hit in early 2020, 2021-2022 has been a year of renewed hope for global engagement. In the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE), our optimism was strengthened by hearing Grinnell students share their experiences studying off campus. In Fall 2021, 49 students studied off campus in 20 different countries, often navigating travel restrictions and program modifications with resilience and a sense of humor. Over 90 students plan to study off campus this spring in 25 different countries. Their persistence and ability to deal with ambiguity inspires us.

We are extremely grateful to our OCS partners that have implemented COVID contingency plans for classes and housing and offered flexible refund policies to help students during this continued time of uncertainty; to the College administration for supporting global engagement opportunities; and for our many campus partners for their flexibility and collaboration, including but not limited to the Registrar's Office, Student Accounts, Financial Aid, Housing, SHAW, and the Global Health & Safety Committee.

This past fall semester would not have been as successful as it was without IGE's incredible cohort of Global Envoy peer advisors. The Global Envoys have had a plethora of global experiences and, as such, share deep knowledge about the variety of faculty-led course-embedded and off-campus study programs that are offered at Grinnell and the many resources available to support those experiences. Global Envoys are the first point of contact for all students considering global engagement opportunities. In addition to peer advising, the Global Envoys are instrumental in carrying out all marketing efforts and leading many of IGE's events.

OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

Alicia Stanley & Casey Clements



"One of my memorable times in Copenhagen was when I visited Tivoli with my Danish Language and Culture class. I enjoyed the historical landscape and the Christmas decorations, which allowed me to experience the Danish tradition. The rich culture altered my one-dimensional perspective and encouraged me to perceive things from various standpoints."

**MASAKI NAWA '23, DIS COPENHAGEN
FALL 2021 PARTICIPANT**

We are pleased to be working with many students applying to study off campus in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 and participate in an IGE-CLS summer internship in Summer 2022. We hosted several promotional events during International Education Week (IEW) last fall, which were in part a large success due to the marketing creativity of the Global Envoys. IEW kicked off with the Food Bazaar sponsored by the International Student Organization (ISO) in collaboration with the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA).

"If I had to describe my experience as a Global Envoy with only one word, it would be "family." Every time I walk through the IGE doors and put on my Global Envoy nametag, I become part of a close-knit family of students and staff members who all are as equally as passionate as I am to strengthen global learning through international learning and research. Events such as making Brazilian brigadeiros in the Marcus Family Global Kitchen for International Education Week and working with the Language Learning Center to encourage students to learn foreign languages have only deepened my passion for being at the forefront of fostering multicultural exchanges."

TRINISA FUNG, '23
FALL 2021 GLOBAL ENVOY

A variety of panels, demonstrations and information sessions took place throughout the rest of the week. The session topics ranged from Global Exploration and Discovery through the Watson Fellowship hosted by the Center for Careers, Life, and Service's Global Fellowships, a demonstration on making Brazilian Brigadeiros put on by the language learning center (CLIC) in collaboration with the Global Kitchen, and then there was the exciting return to an in-person Global Opportunities Fair. The Global Opportunities Fair safely brought 19 OCS partners to campus who shared information about their off-campus study options with more than 300 students eager to return to global exploration.

As countries around the world roll out vaccines and OCS programs adapt, it is becoming more realistic for students to make firmer plans. It is wonderful to see that students remain eager to enhance their academic, pre-professional and personal interests by engaging with others around the world. And we are honored to have the opportunity to advise and support them throughout their global engagement experiences.

IGE Global Envoys for Fall 2021



Fall 2021 IGE Info Session



HARUNA SUZUKI '23



KAWAGOE, JAPAN

REDISCOVERING MYSELF

BY RELIVING HISTORY

I studied abroad this Fall 2021 in Hungary, a country in the middle of Europe. Although it is surrounded by so many big and influential countries, it has its own language, food, culture, currency, and rules. Our program was based in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. Budapest is a city divided into two (literally into a Buda side and the Pest side!) by the famous Danube River. Within the city, there are so many different characteristics depending on the district.

The most memorable thing about Budapest is the beautiful buildings. We were surrounded by historical buildings, which felt like “reliving” history! All the apartments are historical buildings and all the residents have been fighting to preserve them; we were living on the fourth floor of an apartment, but did not have an elevator because the residents voted against it to protect the building. Wherever you go, you’ll see monuments, landmarks, and beautiful old buildings. Even their bars are fancy because they decided to use old ruins for a bar scene!

Simply walking around Budapest made me feel directly exposed to the country and its atmosphere. I appreciated everything that was in sight: the yellow trams running past, people going home from with their huge bag of paprika peppers, the smell from my tiny bakery, people in the store on their phones, the statue sitting there staring at that one point on the wall, people zooming by on their electric scooters, the sunlight shining on the carvings of the building walls...

It’s funny because Budapest is the biggest city in Hungary and it was the definition of the busy modern world. However, we were always amazed by the history that just caught our eyes. The presence of the country’s history made me think about my own. One thought that I focused on is how living as a “foreigner” for three months led to me rediscovering my identity.

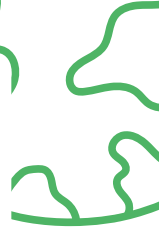
This is how my stay in Budapest started: being all alone. A staff member from the institution and my landlady greeted me and lead me through paperwork, but after they left, I was all alone for the next ten days. I didn’t know anyone in the program, and my roommates were the last to arrive. Initially, we arrived early to quarantine, but received an unexpectedly free two weeks before classes began when COVID mandates were lifted early. I was too scared to interact with Hungarians because I didn’t speak the language, so I didn’t eat proper food until my third day there. I finally gained the courage to march into a restaurant, and successfully ate delicious gnocchi. That courage then built a habit of exploring. I visited landmarks, markets, random stores I found, cafes, restaurants, and so on.

Through those explorations over my first two weeks, I slowly adjusted to living in Budapest. By the time the semester started, I felt comfortable enough that I jumped into a local choir group. It could be scary and uncomfortable going to practices because the members were much older than me and not all spoke English. However, I was able to really experience Hungarian life and culture through my time with them. I also got some local suggestions from them, especially about food!

Surprisingly – though I really appreciated their help, the more I got used to it, the more I began to miss the culture I was familiar with. Although I felt like I was adjusting to the environment, there was always an invisible wall between me and the people, city, and culture. The feeling of discomfort grew stronger and stronger the more familiar I got. This is my first experience of thinking that I'm an outsider in the community at the most random moments throughout the stay. In comparison, I've never felt like an "outsider" in Grinnell because there's so many people like me who come from a different background. I felt comfortable being a "Grinnellian" from the beginning.

What I learned from this experience is how privileged I am to feel so safe and comfortable in the community I live in. It's so simple to say in words -- but I hope I can convey how lucky we are that we live so naturally. Despite the kindness of Hungarian people, the feeling being an outsider came from such small things: when riding a tram or metro, ordering a restaurant, in line of a grocery store, being charged extra, and other "normal" things in life. Things would happen that were subtle, but impactful: being stared at, not being able to understand what they were saying, or not being able to start a small conversation with a clerk.

While I learned so much from and about the culture in Hungary, I also realized how much the cultures that I am familiar with meant to me. I know where to go when I need something. I can identify which one is shampoo and which one I should get because I can read the description on the back. I can tell the conductor that our train ticket should not be that expensive. I'm able to comfortably follow cultural customs. Gaining this perspective also made me want to cherish the people around me who are pushing themselves outside of their comfort zone to learn and grow. Here in Grinnell, although it is in a different country with a completely different culture from where I grew up, it truly makes me feel like I am a part of the community. This is a result of all the members of the community making active effort to being supportive and respectful to each other. I hope this helps readers realize how lucky we are to be here and how we should keep fighting for a better community for all.



VIEW FROM THE FISHERMAN'S BASTION



PEOPLE GATHERING ON THE LIBERTY BRIDGE



CENTRAL MARKET, WHICH IS THE LARGEST MARKET IN BUDAPEST!





GRINNELL • IN • LONDON

Susie Duke, Director of Grinnell-in-London



Grinnell-in-London (GIL) has had a long and meaningful history as Grinnell College, offering the semester experience in London since 1974. In the portfolio of off-campus study (OCS) offerings, it is the only OCS program that gives a cohort of students the unique opportunity to live in a Grinnell community and learn from Grinnell faculty while abroad. Even the faculty teaching on the program can invest in their own scholarship while living in London.



With a Spring 2022 relaunch of GIL, the program has been revitalized with some exciting updates. GIL has welcomed second-year student participation for the first time. Also new this year is a required core cultural course taught by GIL faculty. This course is frontloaded with approximately two weeks of travel around London and the UK. Throughout the semester, the course facilitates a community engagement component, linking theory with practice. The Grinnell faculty co-teach the course with contributions from guest speakers and with field-based learning facilitated by the Director of GIL.



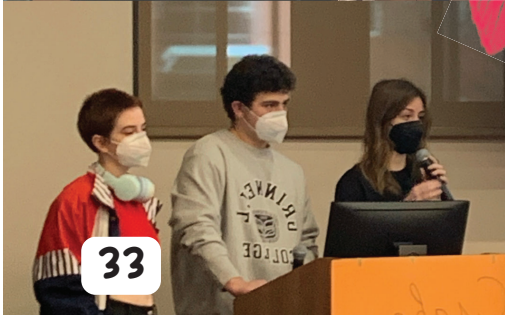
Participating students balance their schedule between Grinnell faculty and local offerings. More specifically, along with the required core cultural course students may take both courses offered by the Grinnell faculty and round out their course load with one or two electives taught by local London faculty.

Finally, in addition to the travels that take place at the beginning of the program, weekend field trips occur throughout the semester. This model of GIL connects the rigorous academic experience at Grinnell to the historical, cultural, and political context of the UK through the immersive semester living in and exploring London and the surrounding region. It is a structure that gives students both the support of a Grinnell community as well as the freedom to explore London and the UK on your own.

STAND WITH UKRAINE!



When Ukraine was invaded by Russia in late February, we saw a swift response on campus. *The Rosenfield Program* organized a Faculty Teach-In to offer relevant historical and political context. President Harris messaged campus to condemn the attack and voice support for students from the region. Student leaders from *European Horizons* and the *International Student Organization (ISO)* organized discussions and support activities. We are grateful for this advocacy, and extend care to all who are directly impacted.



DIMINUTIVES



Reflections from a Fall
2021 Off-Campus
Program in Kyiv, Ukraine

In Moldova, my friend excessively diminutizes a stray cat – котёнок, мой голубчик, миличка... (kitten, my darling, sweetheart). We are at the base of a monastery propped up atop a hill, where monks used to live in small capsule hotel sized rooms carved out of rock.

In the outskirts of Kyiv, there is a reconstructed 19th century Ukrainian village. There, on the bank of a pond, I tip my head back to feel the gentleness of the fall sun. In the background, Ukrainian ladies sing a folk song that is nostalgic, but not sad. I catch a few words: homeland, remembering, life.

On a balcony overlooking Yerevan, I play chess and sip apricot Ararat cognac with friends. Some friends sit on the window sill, conversing in broken Russian with other visitors. Violence peaks through what we experience as the mundane – I pocket a dented bullet casing, two and a half inches long, found lying in front of a supermarket that is later confiscated by airport security.

In Tbilisi at the natural salt baths, I close my eyes tightly as a Georgian woman covers me in bubbles and roughly exfoliates my back before giving me a brisk slap and pouring warm water out of a large bucket all over me. Later, I learn to make nigvziani badrijani (Georgian eggplant rolls), and my senses are fresh – walnut, garlic, and a blend of spices creating a palette completely foreign to me. Music washes over us and adds a vibrational quality to the food. Three men at a table next to us burst into song, apropos of nothing. They sing in Georgian and explain the content to us in Russian.

I dabble in the mysteries of Lviv -- petting a blue eyed bunny in a small, Soviet style decorated room while bartering with an ancient looking man in blue and white striped pajamas. He

opens the door to an elegant restaurant where I look out of a window and listen to street music after duck, risotto, and homemade strawberry lemonade. On the way back to Kyiv, overheated on a rickety overnight train, my thoughts dance and my experiences become a dreamscape.

Looking back now, after substantial time back home, some of the strange and difficult moments merge with the sunny moments to make the whole thing feel like more of a story. I returned from my semester abroad in Kyiv mid-December as tensions rose with the Russian military build-up on the borders. To me and others in my program, the Russian threat did not feel prevalent. To many Ukrainians, it had been prevalent for a long time. Before I left, my host dad, a young father of two, told me matter-of-factly that he was ready to go war when he was needed.

The ease at which he stated this did not surprise me. Like many of his morals, it impressed me. Coming to Ukraine as a “U.S.-progressive” Grinnellian, I found myself at odds with my host father. We talked for hours many nights as his wife Anna sat listening and occasionally correcting her husband, bouncing their one-year-old daughter on her knee. Open-minded and charismatic with a deep booming voice unique to so many Ukrainian men, my host dad listened to my “radical” ideas with fascination and laughter while providing perspective with his own values and experiences.

A POND IN PYROHIV



AT THE OUTDOOR MUSEUM OF FOLK ARCHITECTURE AND THE LIFE OF UKRAINE!

He was humbly committed to and believed in his duty to his wife, children, and country; I witnessed those values reflected in the way he lived his life. He worked long nights and spent the remainder of his time helping his kids grow up with good cheer. He valued physical fitness, wellness, and masculinity. He was brave, eager to learn, and not easily offended. He admitted when he was wrong – and though it took me a while to realize it, our conversations slowly altered the ingrained values of my Grinnellian heart. I found politics, gender, and military all revolve on different axis in Ukraine. Thanks to this relationship, I found examples of who I wanted to be and the kind of relationships I wanted to have.

A few days after Russia invaded Ukraine, I heard from my host family. My host dad had joined the Ukrainian military like he had promised while the family remained in Kyiv. My host dad is the epitome of the Ukrainian citizen, with the moral strength and bravery that is shocking the world as Ukrainian's persevere in the face of Russian aggression.



This story is re-printed with permission from Harper's Bazaar.

GHOSTS OF UKRAINE

Dean Bakopoulos, Associate Professor and
Writer-In-Residence, Grinnell College

I am no expert on Ukraine, but I am an expert on my Ukrainian grandparents, Gregory and Eva Smolij, the most influential people in my life. I was born in 1975, when my grandparents were still working in the factories of Detroit. I remember them as a source of endless love. They were sweet, playful, affectionate, nurturing, helpful, and exceedingly generous. They cooked for me, took care of me when I was sick, played games with me, worked in the garden with me, and told me stories, and sang me songs. I called them Dido and Baba.

Growing up, all our family friends were from the same region in Ukraine, with grandparents who had fled from Stalin only to be captured by Nazis, and though we were not all related by blood, we formed a new kind of extended family in America. On holidays, at birthdays and baptisms, for weddings and funerals, the stories of what was lost and what survived were told again and again. On Sunday mornings, at the Ukrainian church, we sang songs of mourning and exile, and I grew up loving and missing people I didn't know, the cousins and aunts and uncles who still lived behind the Iron Curtain, and the ones who'd been slaughtered or taken away to Siberia. We sang songs praising a beautiful homeland I had never seen, though I still considered it to be our home.

It's hard to explain what it was like to be a kid at one of these gatherings and watch the adults gather around a table, usually in some Detroit basement with its own homemade bar, and take shots of vodka (the preferred anti-trauma medication of that generation) and suddenly begin singing, in wondrously perfect four-part harmony, a sweeping, melancholic, yearning folk song from Ukraine. My friends and sister and I would watch the adults and giggle uncomfortably at my grandmother's soaring and tipsy alto, but we all knew why, by the second verse, they all were fighting back tears, their voices escalating, breaking, going off-key, unashamed, free. When the song ended, there would be silence as more shots were poured, and conversation would resume, and I knew that the whole room was now full of ghosts.

The stories I heard as a child of the Ukrainian diaspora could sometimes be harrowing. In our social circle, everyone had a story like ours, and my grandparents' story is complex but not uncommon: In 1944, not long after my grandfather deserted the Polish army where he had been conscripted, Gregory and Eva fled the tiny village of Michnowec in western Ukraine where they had been born, raised, and married. They fled at night as Soviet troops advanced on the village. They'd already seen some of their siblings and friends and a local priest shot and buried alive, and they knew, as young people who were part of the resistance against Stalin, that they would be killed if they had stayed. And so, at the urging of their parents, whom they would never see again, they fled west without a

plan, just as so many Ukrainians are doing today as I write this. They fled on foot, into the forest on the edge of the village, and they didn't stop running until they were arrested and taken to a Nazi labor camp at Buchenwald.

My grandfather was weak and malnourished by then, because he gave any food he could find to my grandmother, seven months pregnant. When the American planes dropped bombs overhead, and the prisoners ran for the trenches, my grandfather laid down for a rest from ditch digging, already indifferent to what seemed like his inevitable death. Meanwhile, Eva was tormented by Nazi troops whenever she grew too tired to work. Once, she stole a rotting turnip from a bombed-out train car, and a German soldier put his boot on her throat and gun to her forehead as my grandfather looked on helplessly. I don't remember when I first heard this story, or the dozens of others like them, because I always knew those stories. They were omnipresent in my childhood. They were the first stories I'd ever heard.

Eventually, Americans liberated the camps and my grandparents immediately fled from the approaching Soviet forces, who were rounding up Ukrainians for repatriation or execution. When my grandmother went into labor and collapsed in a roadside ditch, my grandfather collapsed alongside her. They lay there for some time, the contractions worsening, until an American soldier (described by my grandmother, later, with deep gratitude, as a tall, calm-voiced African-American man in a helmet) drove by in a jeep, noticed them, did a U-turn, carried them into his vehicle, and took them to a nearby field hospital, where he charged the mayor of a small German town with that task of seeing to it that my grandmother could safely give birth. This is how my mother, Lubomyra, was born. That soldier is probably the reason why my mother exists and why I exist. It would have been so easy to die in that ditch.

Twelve hours later, my grandparents, baby in arms, had to flee the Soviets again, and they walked 20 miles, my grandmother hemorrhaging, until they arrived at an American refugee camp, where they lived for the next four years, until getting boat passage to America and eventually settling in the large Ukrainian immigrant community of metro Detroit.

I was just a kid in the 1980s and knew nothing of political policy, and so I liked Ronald Reagan, who seemed to hate the Soviet Union as much as we were raised to hate them. As a child, that was my sole political issue. I wanted to see the regime that had harmed the people I loved so deeply punished and defeated. I remember playing the board game Risk at a friend's house once and enacting a scenario where Ukraine confidently marched into Russia, finally triumphant. When I played with army guys in the basement, they were always liberating Ukraine. I kept a tiny Ukrainian flag in the bin with my G.I. Joes.

And then, as the '80s progressed, and Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms began to take hold abroad, my grandmother's favorite little brother, Ivan, whom she hadn't seen since she fled for the woods in 1944, unexpectedly received permission from the Soviet Union to come to Detroit for a visit. I remember going to get him at the airport. We waited at the arrival gate at Metro Airport and he came off the plane, a stocky and sturdy man about my height, with a full head of gray hair and eyes and a nose that looked a lot like mine. I will never forget my grandmother's face when she saw him. I have never seen a reunion like that before or ever since, with the weight of generational sorrow so heavy on their backs as they collapsed into one another, sobbing. We all sobbed. It was an extraordinary moment, one I now realize was one of healing, of destroying at least some of the trauma and grief that had weighed on my family so heavily. We stopped at the Meijer grocery store on the way home, and I remember my great uncle crying when he saw the lunch meats. He could not believe we lived in a land of such bounty. Somewhere, in my mother's photo albums, there is a picture of him standing in front of the meats, proudly posing without even a hint of irony.



COURTESY OF LUBOMYRA SMOLIJ BAKOPOULOS

The two saddest days of my life were the days my grandparents died. At my grandfather's funeral (Ukrainian funerals are emotionally excruciating affairs) I stood up, and, for the first time, sang alongside the group of old men and women I've known my whole life. In front of his open casket, we sang "Do You Hear, My Brother?" The lyrics translated roughly like this...

Do you hear, my brother,
My dear, comrade,
Flying away there, in a gray line,
Are the cranes, for winter.
Crying: kroo-kroo-koo,
In a foreign land I'll die,
By the time I fly across the sea,
I'll wear away, my wings,
I'll wear away, my wings.

It is almost unbearable to sing the song, to mimic the kroo of the whooping crane, with its heavy minor keys and low harmonies, and I remember singing it and hoping that before my grandfather went wherever it was he would go after death, he got to see his homeland one more time. This was in 2000, and Ukraine had been independent for nine years or so, a fact that my grandfather considered a miraculous triumph.

In 2008, when my grandmother was dying, she lingered longer than anyone expected, and I drove all night from Wisconsin to Detroit in hopes of seeing her in time to say goodbye. After a 10-hour drive, I arrived at my mother's small ranch house, where my grandmother was dying in a room that had been my first bedroom, over-caffeinated and un-showered, with emotions indescribable, and a focus hazy and strange. I greeted my exhausted mother, who'd been caring for Baba for the past few years, and went down the hall to my old bedroom, where my grandmother was asleep in an adjustable bed, half-conscious, in a morphine haze, while a hospice nurse read a magazine in the next room.

I went into the room alone and shut the door. My grandmother moaned in a strange and haunting way, and I wondered what she was remembering. Were the buried traumas of the war bubbling up inside of her, keeping her awake and away from her final sleep? That is what I imagined, at least. Unsure of what to do or say in that moment, having no answers or certainties, yet sensing that she was suffering both physically and emotionally

I thought of the only scripture I know well, the Book of Job, and I thought of its ending, the long litany of questions that comes at its close, and so I began to ask my grandmother questions in Ukrainian. "What do you think you'll see when you die? Will you see your village? Will you see your father and your sister and your brother? Will you see the horse you left behind, your nursery school students?"

Soon, my grandmother's breathing began to slow, and she began to lie still. The moans from her mouth subsided, and she turned her head toward me, eyes still closed, but somehow, I felt like she could see me. I took her hand, and asked more questions. "Will you see all your friends? Will you get to eat? Smoke? Will there be vodka? Will you see Dido? Will you be singing? I always loved your singing."

Minutes later, my grandmother was gone, and I went back out in the hallway and told my mother that her mother was dead and that I hoped the cranes were leading her home.

I thought of them both this week, of course, my Dido and Baba, as Vladimir Putin sent Russian troops into Ukraine. I'd known this day was coming—Ukrainians knew it in their bones—but I did not expect that I would burst into tears, or that I would cry off and on all night and most of the next day, unable to sleep, or work, or eat. Instead, I scrolled through Twitter and watched the situation get worse and worse until it began to resemble how Stalin's genocidal campaign began in the 1930s and '40s. It appeared to be the same kind of darkness, the same reckless evil, and the same violent hatred that my grandparents had fled. The only thing that had changed was the name of the despot.

Perhaps what unites all people who come from a group that has endured collective suffering is not really the commonality of our experience. What is or was done to us and by whom, and how it felt, is not the same. But there is something intangible that could and should unite us, to rally us against injustice and oppression and violence wherever we see it. The commonality is that we share a particular brand of hope, a deep desire for the violence to finally be over, coupled with the exhausting fear that it never will be. And still, we work, and we grieve, and we hope. Maybe, someday, we will be able to work and grieve and hope together, united in a way that finally becomes more powerful than the fascists and despots, be they in a foreign land or our state houses or in our neighborhood precincts. Because our children deserve better and our ancestors, they've suffered enough, and they, those sweet souls who survived so we could live, deserve to finally rest.

FISCHLOWITZ TRAVEL FELLOWSHIP

The **Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship** provides an opportunity for Grinnell College international students to pursue casual yet purposeful independent travel in the United States, focused on deep exploration of a chosen theme. One award of \$5,400 is available each year, made possible through the generous support of **Teresa and Merle Fischlowitz '53**.

This past year, 2021-22 recipient **Diana Chege '22** (Nairobi, Kenya) visited with Black women and their variety of kitchens to explore Black women's experiences in the U.S. Inspired by courses she has taken in Grinnell and her experiences with her mother in their home kitchen, Diana wanted to visit historic, corporate, and communal kitchens to interview and learn more about how Black women view their work in these personal or corporate spaces, and what these stories reflect about American food culture as a whole.



Diana & the owner of Sweet Maple Sugar in Chicago, IL



Diana at Lalibela in LA, a family-owned Ethiopian restaurant. She is with one of the family members, who is also a manager at the restaurant.

"For my Fischlowitz, I traveled to California, San Diego, Texas and Chicago in order to learn from Black women in the food business. I was able to interview over 11 women who identified in different ways within the food industry: chefs, homecooks, hosts, restaurant and café owners, and food experimenters. From Black women who had been running their businesses for 20+ years to those who opened theirs 9 months ago, I learnt about the **joy** of food and cooking as a place for practicing various kitchen literacies that allow these women to craft spaces for themselves in places they have not been considered before. To learn more about the experiences of the Black women I interviewed, come take a look at the exhibition I'll be hosting on May 6th."

Diana recorded all of her interviews with the hopes to create a podcast documenting the stories and experiences of each woman. She plans to complete the podcast by the end of the 2021-22 school year for her final Fischlowitz Travel Fellowship presentation and exhibition.



SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY

The reputation of the Korean military has been plummeting over the past few decades after multiple accounts of abuse and corruption have been exposed. I can proudly tell you that, from what I know, no one - not a single soul - is excited to enter the military in Korea. Here, at Grinnell, I realized that people are curious about how I feel about joining the military. Here is how I feel: Utterly. Annoyed. A year and a half in your twenties is incredibly valuable time. The fact that I have to spend a year and a half of those precious years stuck in a military base is quite frustrating. I can't even describe the feeling of my graduating year changing from 2025 to 2027.

SUNJAE KIM



SOUTH KOREA '25

However, there are larger risks at hand. South Korea is at war against North Korea. An armistice signed by the US, South Korea, North Korea, and China on July 27, 1953, stopped the war. And though the war may have ceased, chances of invasion still exist. Because of this, having a military always at standby is crucial for peace. No matter how meaningful my personal life goals are, the military is a responsibility that I have no choice but to bear for the physical safety of my country. I do not know what is waiting for me or whether I am looking forward to it. Yet, I know that it is a duty I must carry out as a Korean.



HAVIN LIM



SOUTH KOREA

I worked as a human resources specialist position in an artillery base camp supporting our administrative information officer. My role was to keep track of all the soldiers' mid-tour leave records, granting permission for their DA 31, a form that allows soldier to leave for specific reasons (like vacation). Many people misunderstand that administrative clerks have much more relaxing tasks compared to other roles in the army. To be honest, I had a lot of trouble communicating with people I have never met in my life, who had totally different environmental backgrounds. Spending 18 months in the military was a brand-new experience that I will never have again in my life. It was stressful trying to get along with all different kinds of people. As I think of it now, it did help me gain more patience, in terms of human relationships, and being more responsible for my actions.



JAKE LEE M

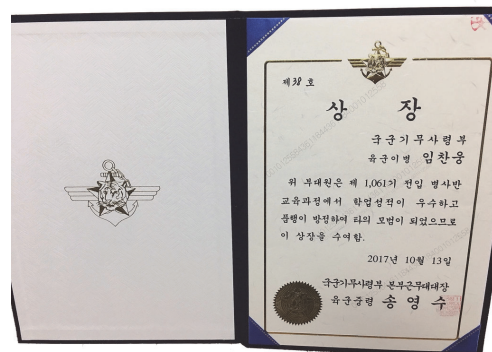


Imagine you wake up surrounded by people that you don't know, isolated from your friends and family while getting called by a number instead of your name. In the bootcamp, my number was 163. I served 21 months from the fall of 2017 to the spring of 2019 in Military Intelligence Unit, DSU, (Defense Security Unit) as a translator for 2nd Infantry Division of USFK (United States Forces Korea) in Camp CRC/Casey, Uijeongbu province, Korea. As a translator, I facilitated the communication between Korean and US military officers, which required me to study different military terminology or jargon that are used both in the US and Korea. Because I had worked for military intelligence unit, most of the details of my service require to be confidential. Legends say that those who had previously worked

or DSU weren't able to travel out of Korea within a year after their discharge for national security reasons. Thankfully, those requirements have already perished during my time of service.

For translating purposes, I was accompanied to different US & Korea joint field exercises where I got to see the tanks, attack helicopters, and other military vehicles on operation. Furthermore, I had the luxury of stationing in US military barracks that allowed me to use all the facilities that were available exclusively for US soldiers, which was beyond compare with those of the Korean military. Some events that I remember are Thanksgiving and Christmas when steaks or lobsters were served in the DFAC (Dining Facility). On the day of the Super Bowl, there wasn't any training in the morning so that everyone could watch the Super Bowl in their rooms, given the time zone difference.

My experience in the military was definitely better than most, given that the vast majority of Korean guys end up doing their service in the mountains right across the 38th parallel facing North Korea. Yet, the fact that I was suddenly isolated from college, family, and friends was equally depressing. Absence or loss of things that we take for granted allows us to reflect back on how large those elements took part in our lives. I was thankful to the friends that I had made in my first year remembering me upon my return; the OISA members who had helped me settle back in college; and new friends that made me feel welcomed back to the Grinnell community despite the 2 year gap.



A BREATH OF FRESH AIR IN COPENHAGEN



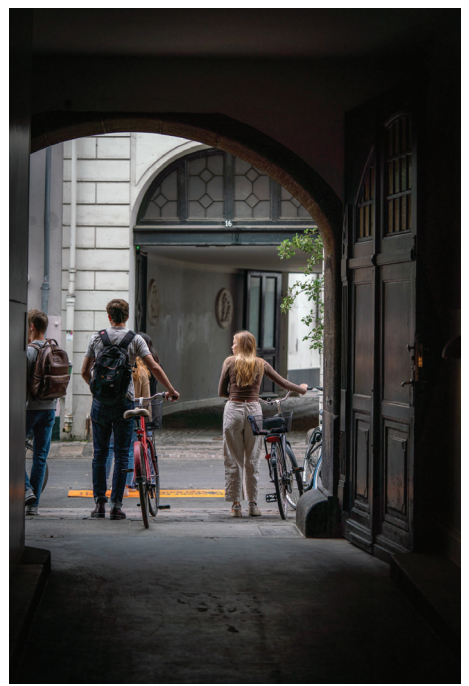
CAMERON LEUNG '22



ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Copenhagen, Denmark. Spearheading the charge for a green and sustainable society. A country where there are more bikes than cars, where its citizens are some of the happiest in the world, and where one is never more than 52 km away from the ocean. In his study abroad in Copenhagen, Cameron Leung '22 explored the bold steps Denmark has taken to become the greenest country in the world. Through the lens of his camera, Cameron captured daily life in Denmark from the ingrained biking culture to the historic bond with the sea.

See more of his work at <https://www.cameronkleung.com/photography>





MY GRINNELL EXPERIENCE

Graduation! It's almost here. Four years have passed quickly, and it is almost time to walk the stage to get the highly coveted undergraduate degree. Rexford Essilfie is my name, and I am an international student from Ghana at Grinnell. I got the slightest hint that a school like Grinnell existed from a document shared by my college counselor in high school. Even after that first glance at the school, it was still far from my focus for schools. Little did I know that I would soon be Grinnell bound, and the journey has been more than I could ask for!

My first introduction to the Grinnell town was an Airbnb taken care of by a wonderful lady named Judy Durr, who was a very helpful connection that I made. In all, I have made very wonderful connections with different faculty, staff, and town members. Soon after settling in, IPOP began. Though the details are very much fuzzy by now, I cannot forget the relationships that I formed during that time, the wonderful activities such as the scavenger hunt, and my first time playing piano again publicly since leaving Ghana, at the Grinnell Arts Museum. We had a mini karaoke session, singing tunes like Hallelujah and Bruno Mars' "When I Was Your Man." Not to end there, another important IPOP experience was when we were asked to imagine a map of the world

on the ground and to sit in the locations of our respective home countries. This confirmed my suspicions. I was the only Ghanaian in our cohort! This sparked a desire for me to get to know others around me and to break out of my otherwise introverted self. I recall having meals with multiple groups of friends during that time, going on scavenger hunts, and having my first lunch at Choung Garden. I am still close with many of the friends I met up until this last stretch.

First-year classes at Grinnell really took me by storm. I was fascinated by all the options and my interests. I knew that I wanted to major in Computer Science but also loved learning about and making music. Why not add on a music double major? So, I did, and started off full-force with 21 credits in my first semester, taking the infamous Functional Programming in Scheme course, the reading-packed Introduction to Music class, the assignment-packed Intermediate French class, and the early-morning first-year Tutorial. As you would expect these were many, many library nights, until the librarian knew me by name from the countless number of times, she would ask me politely to leave when it was nearing 1 pm. My first-year class, particularly music, was also made very enjoyable by my professor who exposed us to music from all over the world, including from Ghana, my home country! Coincidentally, this professor was also my host parent, and this made the class more comfortable right out of the gate. Special thanks to OISA and FIS for this match made in heaven!

Speaking of host parents, a big cultural shock I had within my first couple of weeks was being invited to a lunch and concert at an outdoor restaurant. At my table were other Grinnell professors! As a first-year student, I did not feel like I belonged at that table. I was, however, made to feel welcome, and have had many more interactions of such kind during my time here.



Outside of the many, many classes that have been taken in Grinnell, my Grinnell experience has been filled with invaluable experiences and relationships through club activities and leadership opportunities in the ACSU (African and Caribbean Students Union), CS-SEPC (Computer Science Student Educational Policy Committee), Wilson Center Incubator Fund, and Christian groups such as Black Faith, and Grinnell Christian Fellowship. Black Faith and ACSU groups in particular, were a thriving space for me. Every Saturday night, I would meet other black and Christian students on campus to check in on each other and have intimate conversations about our well-being and our faith. There was always something to uplift, something to be inspired by, and something to be challenged by. At ACSU, I had the opportunity to connect with the larger African and Caribbean student community on campus for fun banter, laughs, dance, delicious foods from represented countries, and more. Current alumni blazed the trail for us, passing down the various traditions of games and events such as FIFA nights, head wrapping sessions, a carnival night, and more. It was easy to find a space and people to call home and family. Support from my “adopted” brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and friends abounded and was very needed especially given my course-load-loving tendencies!

In addition to these wonderful experiences, I have had the opportunity to do a lot of meaningful and fulfilling jobs through Grinnell. The most notable of these job opportunities was an internship with Chipper Cash as a Software Engineering Intern. This opportunity was a miraculous one that has transformed and shaped my knowledge and skills in very practical ways I could only dream of prior to joining. Beyond this, their values of “Being an Owner” and “Leading with Empathy” have bled in from Chipper’s values into mine.

I was inspired out of my mind to hear the stories of founders Ham and Maijid, two Grinnell alumni, as they solved, and continue to solve problems from my home in Ghana. The connection to Chipper Cash – while miraculous – was also fostered by two key Grinnell connections. First, a co-student worker at the Wilson Center, Connor Headrick '20, who also interned with Chipper Cash at the time. The second was again through the host family of one of the co-founders of Chipper, Ham Serunjogi. The understandably proud host family introduced me to Chipper and eventually to Ham who was passing by to visit over the 2019 summer when I was stuck...no, happily engaging in a research program at Grinnell!

There are many more reflections and memories that will not make it to this page, but each one has played a key role in my formation throughout my time at Grinnell. The final one I should mention is the support from the USA, namely Karen and Brenda. Their guidance through the web of requirements for international students, conversations, and invitations to participate in various events have made for a pleasant time at Grinnell for me. The many experiences and points of growth I have had at Grinnell would not have been possible without support from OISA, my host family, the church (both Black Church and local churches like Grinnell Christian Church), my college advisors, my wonderful family, and friends, and above all else God!

After Grinnell, I hope to continue with the 4+1 Grinnell/University of Iowa Master of Computer Science. Following this, I hope to work as a Software Engineer, making an impact on the world through my work, while also supporting those yet to walk down the same road I have traveled.



ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

ON FITTING IN

Danica Bojovic '19 - Belgrade, Serbia

The most difficult thing about the pandemic was spending a lot of time with myself. Just me and my thoughts. When you leave me like that (just my thoughts, no buzzing, no meetings, no obligations), my mind starts ringing with a million voices, all previous versions of myself who are extremely inquisitive about where I am going to 'end up'.



Outside the loggia of Read Hall with my friends Ayon (left) and Erhaan (right).

But let me introduce myself first, otherwise this article might not make sense. I am a Grinnell alumna from Belgrade, Serbia. I studied Biology and French with a Neuroscience concentration and I had the chance to study abroad in France, Netherlands, and Russia. Grinnell was a one of a kind educational utopia for me -- an environment that allowed me to reach my full potential. Seriously, I feel like my story is exactly what they advertise on the brochures (even though I'm the first one to criticize them, always).

Nonetheless, since the moment I moved to the US, I have been dragging an internal conflict of belonging, as if there was a big decision to make about where to unpack my suitcase, once and for all. I struggle with Imposter Syndrome and am overly concerned about being capable of adjusting to different places and situations. So, you can see the conflict: the need to unpack my suitcase clashes with the need to move and adapt everywhere. The loneliness of the pandemic buried me under this question and I felt displaced and alienated from people around me. However, the reality is that adaptation is a really big deal when you feel like you can't go "back home" before you do something big, meaningful, significant. I know **that many of us**, international students, at Grinnell feel like we even **cannot** go live back in our home countries. Therefore, we're always in a position to figure out where to go next and how to smoothly transition towards finding a *home* (if you're equally obsessed about that idea). This process is a rocky road that usually involves: visa issues, money issues, moving around, and thinking ahead.

I am currently in a neuroscience PhD program (Vollum Institute, Portland, OR), a proud 3rd year student, specialized in spending time alone despite being an extrovert. After all of my frantic attempts to fit in, COVID gave me the chance to finally give up and go home - to myself. The truth is, when life takes you to different cities, states, or countries, you cannot live with the expectation to simultaneously be yourself (or even **the full expression** of yourself) and fit in everywhere. So, finding home sometimes involves not fitting in. I know that this might disappoint many of you reading this article, but I really do believe this is an important truth to remember if you want to live with a sense of integrity.

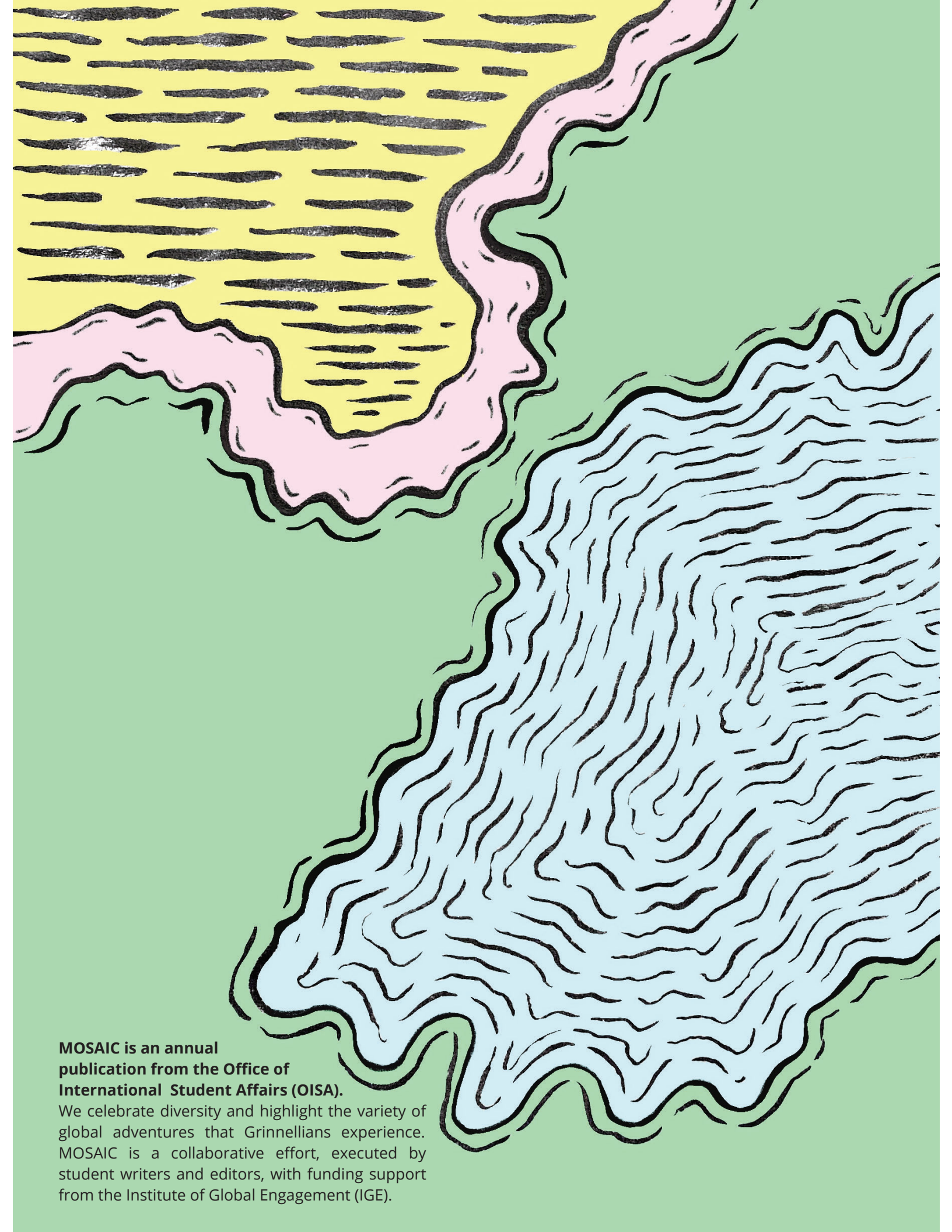
Wise words from IPOP (thanks Karen Edwards) still resonate with me: you came to Grinnell in the first place to do something good for yourself, but you're also providing something (your awesomeness) to Americans and all other people you encounter. Once you figure out how to take care of yourself and feel safe within your community, you will find it easier to "fit in" in America. You might realize that many Americans are genuinely happy to have you, and that's what *home* is.

So please, do yourself a favor and treat your buddy with some coffee from the Grill, guest-in somebody at the D-hall, find a solid study buddy, hug a friend. It might help ease the challenge of fitting in, for a short while. The more you do it, the better distracted you get from a seemingly scary road ahead.

Cultural Evening 2018

Danica!





MOSAIC is an annual publication from the Office of International Student Affairs (OISA).

We celebrate diversity and highlight the variety of global adventures that Grinnellians experience. MOSAIC is a collaborative effort, executed by student writers and editors, with funding support from the Institute of Global Engagement (IGE).