

ACCESS

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIVISION OF CONTINUING AND GLOBAL EDUCATION

MAGAZINE

**SHIELDS FAMILY
GIVES TO
STUDY
ABROAD**

SAHIL PATHAK
**FINDS
WEALTH
IN WATER**

**OPENING
DOORS**
FOR INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

LUCY SHERMAN
**MAKING
FRESNO
HOME**
FOR INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS



Message from THE DEAN



In this edition of Access, we celebrate our students and uncover some quiet champions who are largely responsible for their success. Behind each student is a story of support. Some support is clearly visible: supplemental instruction, tutoring, outreach. Other support is less obvious; it is often quiet, humble, reflective, and potentially much more important. Sometimes support comes from shy networks of community members, aligned by deeply personal experiences that create opportunities through which our students find their success.

Within these pages of Access, we celebrate the largest gift to support study abroad in our campus' history by telling the beautiful story of the Shields family. Liz Shields and her family wandered the globe (without getting lost) and made a choice to remove financial obstacles that prevent many Fresno State students from doing the same.

We explore the significant impact the Muhareb family is making to encourage international students to pursue their potential. I am an immigrant myself; and while I did not endure the cultural shock that many of our international students feel on an American campus, I have experienced first-hand the impact that gestures of encouragement and kindness when welcomed into a foreign environment. And I agree with Michael Muhareb, "there is no better place for educational opportunity than here," at Fresno State.

We look at how our international students support each other and facilitate the acculturation of new international students, learn about education in Nanjing, China, and meet Lucy Sherman who has spent a lifetime of kindness welcoming international students to Fresno.

I often tell people that Continuing and Global Education is about facilitating educational opportunity and Access for our community. And as our students take advantage of these new opportunities, we must not overlook those quiet champions, whose kindness, encouragement, and philanthropy created that student Access. So to our student supporters, whose actions and gifts have impacted the lives of our students, let me take this opportunity to recognize you.

Thank you,

Scott D. Moore, Ph.D.

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ACCESS

About the Cover Photo

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FRESNO STATE
Continuing and Global Education

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University Storyteller Helps Students

Thrive Abroad

in Faculty-Led Trips

BY CYNDEE FONTANA-OTT



Documentary storyteller **Jes Therkelsen** shows audiences the world in photographs and films.

BUT HE ALSO BRINGS TOGETHER PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT WORLDS THROUGH FRESNO STATE'S DIVISION OF CONTINUING AND GLOBAL EDUCATION.

Jes Therkelsen, an associate professor in the Media, Communication and Journalism Department, leads faculty-led trips to places like Naboutini, Fiji, and the Volta region of Ghana. He believes study-abroad experiences allow students to learn about different cultures, expand their world view and promotes self growth.

"It's an amazing benefit to study abroad," said Therkelsen, who also teaches photography for National Geographic during most summer breaks. "When I took the second trip to Fiji, none of the five (department) students had ever left the country and three had never been on an airplane. It kind of opened up the world for them."

Therkelsen, who earned his Master of Business Administration at Fresno State, typically takes part in study abroad programs during the winter break. He's taken students to Naboutini, Fiji, where they immersed themselves in the culture, helped with community service projects – in cooperation with the nonprofit Madventurer -- and documented the experience.

The journeys include service learning components, such as helping build a community center in the small village that flourishes despite no electricity and running water. The 2014 trip and student experience is shown in the half-hour documentary "Fresno to Fiji," which was broadcast on Valley PBS.

The trips cemented a strong bond between Fresno and Naboutini. "Now, you go to the village and see kids wearing Fresno State t-shirts," Therkelsen said.



Khonesavanh Saysamongdy, who graduated with a media communications and journalism degree in 2017, took part in a two-week Fiji trip.

“The most rewarding part of the trip was being able to meet so many great people and creating forever, lasting memories within the travel group as well as those from Fiji,” said Saysamongdy, who recommends the experience to other students. **“There is a whole new world out there for you to see.”**





Therkelsen's trips also have included travel to Ghana, where Fresno State students and faculty offered their expertise to cocoa farmers in the southeast Volta region, where farmers have struggled to bounce back from wildfires that swept over the land in the 1980s. The visiting group, including faculty and students with Agriculture and Business backgrounds, worked on ideas to help farming become more efficient, productive and sustainable.

"This was the first time Fresno State went to Ghana," Therkelsen said. "We just want to create an ongoing collaboration with that region."

Another destination has been Tanzania, where students helped build community in schools and particularly with girls and young women, who drop out for many reasons. With the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC), Therkelsen traveled last summer to Ireland to teach photography and storytelling as a visiting professor.

Therkelsen said he's worked with 60 to 70 Fresno State students during various study abroad programs, describing those experiences as important opportunities for growth and deepening cultural understanding.

“All of those trips are valuable,” he said. “Study abroad is something that is really vital to this University.”





Fresno State Alumni **USE GRANTS** to *open doors* for **International Students**

BY FARIN MONTANEZ

A MODEST \$1,250 GRANT MADE A HUGE IMPACT ON THE FUTURES OF FIVE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS -- AND IT WILL PERHAPS HAVE A RIPPLE EFFECT IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES.

“I’m the only girl in my entire family who got the chance to come here,” said Faiza Khan, a Political Science major in her first semester at Fresno State. “In Pakistan... it’s a society where it is closed off in the mind. If you want to go out, you’re either with your dad, your brother, your husband. But I’m here all by myself because of this grant. When I got the grant I was like, ‘Dad, they want me there. See?’”

The amount of money wasn’t the only reason that allowed Khan to attend Fresno State, where international students face a budget of \$27,000 per year to attend. Rather, it was the gesture -- the idea that these students are worth investing in.

“Maybe this will be an inspiration for the rest of my family to let the girls go out,” Khan said. “In Pakistan, there are girls who are sitting there with a 4.0 GPA, and they have potential and they could get accepted to university, but they don’t have the opportunity.”

Other recipients of the Muhareb Family Grant feel the same way.

“California is an expensive state to come to, and my parents were considering about whether to send me to California or other states, because of thinking about our expenses,” said Wen Fang Kwong, a Business Administration major from Malaysia. “But because I got this grant, my father told me, ‘Okay, you can go, because somebody gave you the chance to go.’ I feel good that I have the chance to get this opportunity. Maybe I have something special.”

The grant was established in honor of Ken Muhareb, a Palestinian immigrant from Je-

ruselum who was also given the opportunity to come to the United States in the late 1960s for college, and chose Fresno State.

Ken Muhareb passed away in December 2016. In his lifetime he helped more than 100 people from the Middle East immigrate to the United States, said his son, Michael Muhareb.

“He always did it in a way where he could be their tipping point for them to come over. He didn’t help them financially, but gave them a place to stay for a little bit until they could integrate with society and figure it out,” he said. “He would usually migrate people over through his restaurant business. They would start as a dishwasher and if they worked hard enough, they got promoted to a busser.”

Like his father, Michael Muhareb attended Fresno State; he graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration -- Finance. His wife, Brittany Muhareb, is also a Fresno State alum.

And, like his father, Muhareb wanted to open doors for international students to come to the United States and live out their American dream.

International students bring

DIVERSITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH

For Fresno State, a university that prides itself on its diversity, attracting international students to campus is extremely valuable.

“International students share globally diverse ideas, values and perspectives with our domestic students, our campus and our community. Some people in our region have not yet had the opportunity to travel internationally, so exposure to global diversity is most likely to occur here, at Fresno State,” said Dr. Scott Moore, dean of the Division of Continuing and Global Education at California State University, Fresno. “That’s why attracting international students is so important. We want our graduates to have dialogued with diverse populations from diverse cultures and diverse values. Our Fresno State graduates have experience seeking common ground with diverse people, and who leave Fresno State as globally competent citizens. This benefits our community and region.”

Taking classes with international students also encourages domestic students to study abroad, said Dr. Sarah Lam, professor and assistant vice president of International Affairs at Fresno State.

“This is very important for our Valley, because a lot of people (from here) have not traveled outside the country, so when they meet someone from another country, it makes them feel real,” she said. “It is also good to dispel stereotypes; it’s good for global understanding.”

Fresno State’s international students also boosts our local economy, Lam said. “From the local perspective economically, every seven international students will bring three jobs to the local community.”



► ***The Muhareb Family Grant for international students is the first of its kind to be offered by Fresno State.***

“There’s one full-time scholarship in business as a bequest to fund students coming from Ecuador and Denmark,” said Katie Adamo Bewarder, associate director of development for the Division of Continuing and Global Education. “Aside from that we’ve never actively fundraised for international students to come to Fresno State.”

During Fresno State’s Day of Giving in 2018, “the Muhareb family put up a challenge gift, saying this is what we want to do, and then they linked with other people interested and passionate about helping international students study at Fresno State,” Adamo Bewarder said.

With community members joining the challenge, the Muhareb’s \$2,500 gift became \$6,250 to split between five students, Adamo Bewarder said.

In addition to Khan and Kwong, other grant recipients include Bi-xuan Ly, a Mechanical Engineering major from Vietnam, Katherine Nathania, a Food and Nutrition Sciences major from Indonesia, and Jatin Taneja, a Computer Science major from India.

Muhareb made the grant open to all international students, regardless of their country of origin or area of study.

“Our family loves hearing the stories of people getting the opportunity to pursue their dreams,” he said. “Our family didn’t want any restrictions on it, as we just wanted to give someone like our dad an opportunity. It doesn’t matter where you’re from. If you are talented, and you want to be here and you want to do things the right way, then we want to help you.”

“My whole life I’ve been around immigration stories,” Muhareb said. “And to me, there’s no better story than that. Where you came from, and how you grew up, and whether there’s an opportunity or not for you -- you come here and it changes everything because this country is so great!”

“There’s no better opportunity than here.”
~ Michael Munarab



Retired profs give \$500,000 TO HELP LOW-INCOME STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD

BY BONHIA LEE

Elizabeth “Liz” Shields, and her late husband, John, loved to travel the world to meet people and see places that showed them what life was like in other parts of the globe.

The Couple met in Botswana after the south African country received its independence in 1966. John Shields, professor emeritus at Fresno State, was a Peace Corps volunteer, and Elizabeth Shields, who was a Fresno State lecturer, was a volunteer from Britain.

They married in Turkey and traveled for about five months through Iran, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, into southern and central Russia, then to Scandinavia where they ran out of money — but were rich in experiences.

That was the beginning of the couple’s global adventures together and the start of a lifelong passion for travel that they would eventually share with Fresno State students who want to study abroad but can’t afford to do so.

The Shields family has established a \$500,000 endowment with Fresno State Study Abroad, the program’s largest gift ever, to build a legacy of helping low-income students experience and appreciate international travel while learning a foreign language, developing cultural competence and independence.

A tree planting and recognition ceremony was held on Monday, Oct. 21, 2019 on the Social Science Quad on the Fresno State campus to honor the Shields family. Liz Shields, her daughter and grandson were in attendance. Dr. Alyssa Nota, president and chief executive officer of the University Studies Abroad Consortium also attended the ceremony.

“The Shields’ impactful and generous gift will fundamentally change our students’ worldviews in positive ways by providing them the opportunity to experience cultures and perspectives often vastly different than their own.”

~ Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro



John and Liz Shields in Japan



“It was a life-changing experience... I was exposed to the real world that I had not ever been exposed to before,”

~ Araceli Duran-Jiménez



Liz with students

The Gift

comes almost two years after the passing of John Shields, who was a professor of Agricultural Economics in the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. Before his death, John and Liz Shields established an annual scholarship grant in 2016 that has helped 15 Fresno State students pay for travel costs and program fees to study at University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) sites, including China, Chile, Japan, Italy, South Korea, Spain, Thailand and Uruguay.

Fresno State is a founding member of the nonprofit consortium of universities in the United States. The universities provide oversight and strategic planning to the consortium and its programs.

“We would just like to give students, especially those who may not have the financial means, an opportunity to go,” said Liz Shields, who was a lecturer of Finance in the Craig School of Business.

This allows students the opportunity to travel, to live and to experience a foreign place where they are not comfortable, but where they will be able to find out how they operate in those environments and what the people are like there, she said.

The Shields' love of travel and their daughter's study-abroad experience learning Chinese and calligraphy in Chengdu, China through USAC inspired them to give. “It changed her. It gave her so much more confidence,” Liz Shields said.

Duran-Jiménez, a Liberal Studies major, started planning for her study abroad experience in high school knowing how expensive it could be. Her sister, Ortencia, who graduated from Fresno State in 2014, also spent a semester in Santiago and paid for most of it herself.

But thanks to the Study Abroad office, Duran-Jiménez learned about scholarship opportunities. She applied for and received a Shields grant that covered the cost of travel and school fees. The grant provided some financial cushion and “allowed me to go outside of my boundaries and explore more of the country and connect more with it,” Duran-Jiménez said.

A semester in Santiago, Chile was eye-opening for Fresno State senior Araceli Duran-Jiménez. The youngest of six from Reedley, Duran-Jiménez experienced deep emotions (and lots of tears) being away from home, but also the joy of discovering herself while embarking on new adventures.

“It was the emotional stress that helped me grow and become independent,” Duran-Jimenez said. “It might have been a little bit hard at times, but if I could go back, I would still do everything again.”

In Santiago, Duran-Jiménez completed a solo two-hour hike to the top of a volcano and made friends with international travelers she met along the way. She visited cities up and down the country from the southern glaciers and hot springs to the Chilean desert.

“It was a life-changing experience ... I was exposed to the real world that I had not ever been exposed to before,” Duran-Jiménez said.

continued...



NOT ALL THOSE
who wander
ARE LOST
J.R.R. TOLKIEN

continued from page 9

Studying abroad allows students to learn beyond the classroom. More than 600 Fresno State students participate in study abroad programs each year. The University has student-exchange partnerships with more than 60 universities worldwide and in the United States, and assists faculty in organizing short-term group tours of selected countries.

“We deeply appreciate the generosity of the Shields family and their proactive engagement to help our students who otherwise would not be able to travel abroad,” said Scott Moore, dean of the Division of Continuing and Global Education at Fresno State. “We know how meaningful these experiences have been for our students. The ability to study abroad is truly transformative and will resonate a lifetime.”

“Donors support where their passions lie. In this case, travel abroad shaped the Shields family in significant ways so they aligned their giving to extend this opportunity to others.”

**~ Paula Castadio,
Vice President of University Advancement**



In Remembrance of John Shields



Chuquicamata December 2013



John and Liz Hiking



USAC

UNIVERSITY
STUDIES
ABROAD
CONSORTIUM

Fresno State's event to celebrate the Shield's family gift supporting students studying abroad brought supporters from across the country. Fresno State was honored to host Dr. Alyssa Nota from the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) in Reno, Nevada. Fresno State is a founding partner of USAC and the Shields gift privileges study with this organization. The Board of Directors at USAC voted to posthumously recognize John Shields as an emeriti USAC faculty, an uncommon distinction given to recognize extraordinary commitment to USAC and international education. Following are Dr. Nota's remarks at the university celebration accepting the Shield's gift.

TO HELP GROW
THE SHIELDS FAMILY
STUDY ABROAD FUND,
contact

KATIE ADAMO BEWARDER
katieadamo@csufresno.edu

Dr. Alyssa Nota's remarks

USAC is a non profit consortium which has existed for almost 40 years and has served over 60,000 students over that time. We have grown from a small operation of a few employees to now over 500 -- including 80 staff in our Reno office on the UNR campus, and over 400 employees abroad including Resident Directors, staff and faculty.

USAC manages and offers over 50 study abroad programs around the world in 28 different countries. Our first were in San Sebastian, Spain and Pau, France – reflecting the original Basque roots of USAC – all the way up to our newest programs in Khon Kaen, Thailand; Krakow, Poland; and Montevideo, Uruguay. Our strongest belief is providing students with an affordable, accessible, high quality academic experience – and we stay true to our philosophy by offering over \$2 million in scholarships each year.

We recognize that we can't do this alone – and so we are grateful for all the support we get from our friends at great institutions like Fresno State, and the extremely valuable support like that of the Shields family.

USAC is sincerely committed to helping underrepresented students – and we recently appointed our first Diversity and Inclusion officer and created a grant to help universities in their diversity initiatives related to study abroad.

We want to acknowledge that the daughter of Profs. John and Liz Shields, participated in the USAC Chengdu, China program where she studied advanced Chinese language, calligraphy, literature and culture. Because of the positive impact that this program had on their daughter, and their support for higher education and high-impact practices, John and Liz held USAC in the highest regards – and I am very honored to know that.

USAC greatly values recognizing individuals who have made exceptional contributions to USAC's mission. We do this through emeritus and post-humous awards, and each year the USAC Board of Directors selects the awardees. This year the Board selected Prof John Shields for this honor and will provide a \$1500 scholarship in his name to a Fresno State student attending a USAC program in the 2019-20 academic year.

LUCY SHERMAN:

Making Fresno Home for International Students

BY SUSAN HAWKSWORTH

International students who travel from distant lands to study at Fresno State may feel nervous or apprehensive about college life in a foreign country. For those lucky enough to meet someone like Lucy Sherman, life in Fresno becomes as comfortable, warm and welcoming as living at home.

Over the course of 20-plus years, Sherman provided housing for over 223 students from numerous countries, including Fulbright students from Cypress, Vietnam and Ukraine. After her husband passed away, she was looking for a good use for “the extra space” in her home, so she posted a notice on the bulletin board in International Student Services and Programs (now known as the International Office) offering rooms for rent.

“I had been volunteering with The International Friendship Program, a group that provided activities for international students,” she explained. “We would pick them up at the airport when they arrived in Fresno, host them for a few days, help them set up bank accounts and find housing. I had extra bedrooms in my house and since I so enjoyed my interaction with the students, it seemed like the perfect solution.”

Her first students took up residence in the fall of 1989. Some stayed only a few days before moving into the dorms or apartments; others lived as long as four years in her home. “I laid down the rules for them, and they all had to cook their own meals, but they were such a great blessing to me,” says Sherman.

Sherman thoroughly enjoyed the experience of hosting students from so many different cultures in her home, which is

filled with mementos and photos from her past residents—many of whom address her as “Mom.” Her birthday, Mother’s Day and other holidays are filled with calls, letters, and emails from many of her past students, and she has traveled to visit them in their home countries of Morocco, Germany, Thailand, Malaysia, and Japan, to name a few.

While Sherman is an avid supporter of Fresno State, she is actually a native of Mississippi. She worked as a “Rosie the Riveter,” repairing airplanes in Dallas, Texas, from 1942-1946 where she met her husband, Bill. They married in 1945 and after a honeymoon visit to Bill’s aunt and uncle in Del Rey, California, they decided to move to Fresno. The Shermans settled in an apartment on O street downtown, where the PG&E building now sits. Bill founded a security company which provided detective and night patrol services, while Lucy raised their daughter.

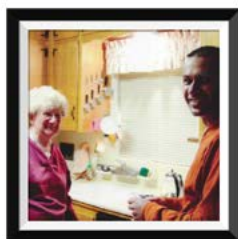
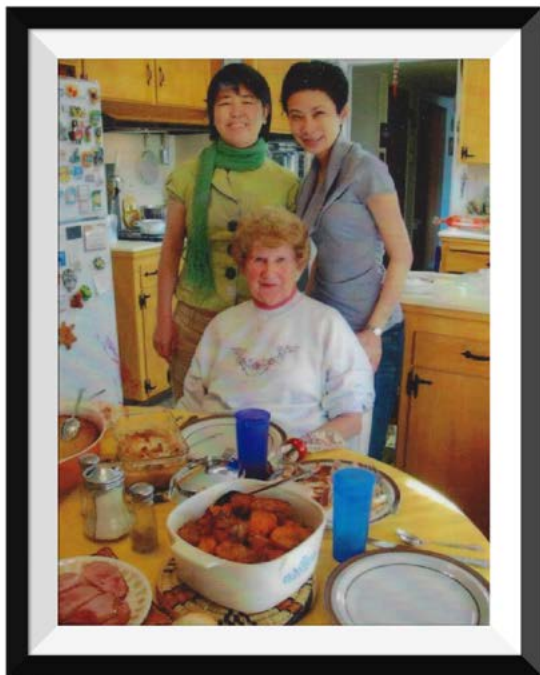
The lasting effects of Sherman’s support and nurturing of international students can be found in Fresno State alums like Christine “Christy” Liew. Christy met Sherman when she arrived in Fresno in 1999 from her home in Malaysia. Liew was inspired to attend college in California by watching the television show Beverly Hills



90210. Looking at a map of the state, she found Fresno halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles and chose that as her destination.

As a volunteer with The International Friendship Program, Sherman picked up Liew, her cousin and a friend at the Fresno airport and helped them acclimate to college life at Fresno State.

“Lucy Mom was always checking up on me during my college years, and she introduced me to American culture. She’s really been an inspiration that I hope to emulate by hosting international students myself someday,” says Liew.



To have someone

ACCEPT US, AND TAKE CARE OF US LIKE SHE DID,

was really wonderful

Liew has remained close to Sherman, celebrating every Thanksgiving and Christmas with her for the last 20 years. Liew earned her Bachelor's in Business Management with a minor in Fashion Merchandising from Fresno State. Now manager of Yoshino's in River Park and married with a young son, she still visits Sherman weekly and helps with medical appointments and other errands.

Julius Tan, another former international student who calls Sherman "Mom," earned his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and now designs the circuit boards that power Keiser athletic equipment. A native of Malaysia, he first met

Sherman in 2013 when she treated him to ice cream at the Rue and Gwen Gibson Farm Market on campus.

"To have someone accept us, and take care of us like she did, was really wonderful. It can be hard to be here, studying in a foreign country, and people like Mom made it so much easier for us," said Tan. He sees Sherman every few weeks and spends Christmas holidays with her, and due to his technical knowledge, is the first one she calls to help with her microwave or other electrical issues at home.

Hosting international students and broadening one's world view is an experience

Sherman highly recommends. She continues to attend weekly International Coffee Hour events hosted by the International Office and loves to learn about the homelands and history of each semester's students.

“Helping these students settle in Fresno and seeing them successfully blend into college life was so fulfilling,” she explains. “As much as they tell me they appreciated it, I’ve been more blessed than they have.”

INDIAN AND SAUDI STUDENT CLUBS *bring* CULTURAL AWARENESS TO CAMPUS

BY FARIN MONTAÑEZ



FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS looking for a home-away from home, CAMPUS CULTURAL CLUBS can be the bridge to finding one's place at FRESNO STATE.

“We recommend that our international students join at least two clubs,” said Dr. Sarah Lam, professor and assistant vice president of International Affairs in the Division of Continuing and Global Education. “Pick one that helps connect you to your country, culture, or language so you feel at home. Then pick another club that will help you integrate into the American culture allowing you to grow with other students – both international students and American students. That is why you come to study in America – to build friendships, networks and learn about the worldviews of others.”

Two of the largest cultural clubs at Fresno State are the Saudi Students Association and the Indian Student Club. Saudi Arabian and Indian students make up more than half of the university's international student population of approximately 775.

Both cultural clubs have become known for their strong leadership and highly visible and well-attended on-campus events.

In spring 2019, Indian Student Club president Sidharth Mageshkumar won the Outstanding Club/Organization President leadership award. Saudi Students Association president Nawaf Al-saif was also nominated for the award.



The two have become good friends over the last couple of years and have promoted each other's clubs whenever possible. “We've been a part of each other's events. We support each other,” Mageshkumar said.

Fresno State's Indian Student Club boasts more than 200 members, and the group is proud to share their culture with the entire campus.

“We want to show the Indian culture to the domestic students here. A lot of people don't know what Indian culture is all about,” Mageshkumar said. “All of the events and festivals that we celebrate in India, we try to celebrate here in the United States. We celebrate the way we do in India.”





CELEBRATING HOLI, *the Festival of Colors*

Diwali and Holi were the two largest events the Indian Student Club held on campus. Diwali, the Festival of Lights, was held in the Satellite Student Union with a turnout of about 150 people who showed up for food and performances by singers and dancers.

Holi, the Festival of Colors, drew a similar-sized crowd. Mageshkumar explained that celebrating Holi involves putting colorful, non-harmful, powders on others. “The basic idea behind Holi is when you have conflict with someone, playfully placing colors on each other helps resolve the conflict.”

Mageshkumar completed his undergraduate work in India then relocated to Fresno State to pursue a master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering. He now works as a project engineer in Los Angeles, CA.



Al-saif, who served as the Saudi Students Association president is in his senior year as an Engineering major with a focus on Construction Management. He studied English Second Language in England and Boston before moving to the West Coast.

“Upon visiting Fresno, I realized, ‘this is my place,’” he said. Al-saif encouraged international students to participate

in university organizations to share and learn about each other’s cultures, traditions and hometowns.

One of the association’s proudest accomplishments is organizing a special graduation ceremony for Saudi students. The student group even made secret video greetings from student’s families who could not travel from Saudi Arabia for graduation. The videos were shown to graduating students for the first time at the ceremony. Al-saif laud-

ed, “The impact on the Saudi students was deeply meaningful. It was one of the most beautiful moments of our graduation.”

The Saudi Students Association also put together a soccer team — the Green Falcons of Fresno State — to compete against other Saudi student teams in a tournament at the University of San Diego. The Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission in America, located in Washington, D.C., organized the tournament.

The club also sought volunteer opportunities in the local community. When the Carr Fire burned more than 220,000 acres in Shasta and Trinity counties in summer 2018, members of Fresno State’s Saudi club traveled to Redding to help victims whose homes were destroyed. “We were not actually putting out the fire, as much as talking to the people who were affected by it and giving people necessities, food or housing,” Al-saif said.

Besides making new friends and building a resume with volunteer and leadership activities, joining a club is a great way to earn a sense of purpose, Al-saif said. “You learn by experiencing and by doing and having something accomplished,” he said. “It gives you more motivation to do bigger things in life.”





VETERANS EDUCATION PROGRAM

PHILLIP LANCASTER stepped off a U.S. military helicopter in Afghanistan at the moment an enemy insurgent fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the aircraft. Events that followed would eventually lead Lancaster to Fresno State's Veterans Education Program.

HIS GOAL: REBUILD HIS LIFE FOLLOWING THE SERIOUS INJURIES HE SUSTAINED THAT FATEFUL DAY IN 2014.

BY DOUGLAS HOAGLAND

The Veterans Education Program has grown since it began in 2012 to provide what one participant calls an “academic boot camp” for veterans and active duty military personnel seeking to attend Fresno State. Those who successfully complete the two-semester program supported entirely by donor support – the only one of its kind in the California State University system – are provided an alternative admission route into Fresno State. Twenty-five men and women have completed the program to date.

Lancaster started in August 2019 as part of the largest cohort (15 members) in the program's history. “It's invaluable for the person who's apprehensive to come back to school after military life,” Lancaster says. “The dean, the professors and everyone wants us to succeed. The program is a ‘thank you’ for serving our country, and it allows each individual to grow and move on with their life.”

Lancaster, 31, grew up in Clovis and served as a Seabee in the U.S. Navy for 13 years. Formally known as United States Naval Construction Battalions, Seabees are charged with building hospitals, schools, barracks and other facilities. He remains in the Navy Reserves.

When the helicopter in Afghanistan took evasive action to avoid the incoming grenade, Lancaster was ejected and thrown 45 feet. He was hospitalized for the next 16 months and underwent multiple surgeries to rebuild the left side of his body. Because of spinal compression, Lancaster went from 6-4 to 6-2 ½ in height, and doctors told him he might be wheelchair bound in the future. Aiming for a career in Construction Management, he decided a college degree would give him the best options in that field.

Lancaster plans to double major in Construction Management and Structural Engineering once he completes the program's courses in English, Math, Communication, Critical Thinking and University skills. After graduating, he plans to start a construction company, hiring like-minded veterans to outfit homes for veterans who have special housing needs. The courses – all taught by Fresno State professors – allow veterans to enter the university with 15 general education units. “The professors are great, and the cohort is great,” Lancaster says. “We have a lot of young, fresh minds in there. It's a really big, positive atmosphere. We all help each other. The program is grooming us to be really good Fresno State students and preparing us for our future careers.”

The Veterans Education Program originally offered six weeks of instruction, but that wasn't long enough. “We had to learn as we grew,” says Dr. Daniel Bernard, associate dean in the Division of Continuing and Global Education and a founder of the program. “We keep evaluating to make it more accessible and make sure we're putting all the benefits and opportunities of the campus in front of veterans.”

One thing about the program has not changed: it relies on private donations from individuals and businesses. “The Veterans Education Program is considered the premier way to interact with pre-matriculated veterans in the CSU, but offsetting the cost is no small task,” Bernard says. “Relying on donations is a stressful business model, but I'm proud of it, and I'll stand by it because it's the right thing to do.” It costs the program about \$5,000 per student each semester to cover tuition, books, course materials, parking passes, student ID cards and tablets. ★



TYLER VERBURG,
a participant in 2017-18, says the program made him realize “how great Fresno State treats its veterans.”



Now a Criminology major, Tyler is scheduled to graduate from Fresno State in spring 2022 and hopes to become a police detective. Verburg, 25, grew up in Easton and graduated from high school early to work on his family’s dairy farm and then learn a trade as a welder. He pursued more life options by joining the U.S. Army, where he served as a forward reconnaissance scout in an armored unit in South Korea and Europe.

Verburg got out of the Army in July 2017 and started the program the next month. “I worried that since I hadn’t been in school for nearly six years, I was going to be lacking a lot of college skills,” he says. “But our teachers never leave anyone behind if they’re struggling.”

Verburg also appreciates the camaraderie he found in the program. The cohort system allows the same group of students to

stay together for the two semesters. “Everybody has served and dealt with similar situations in their military careers,” he says. “We all could automatically connect with one another, and we worked together.” ★

JORDAN CODY, who completed the program in 2017, learned about note taking, studying for tests and how to seek outside help from professors. “I view the Veterans Education Program as an academic bootcamp,” he says. “It provides educational building blocks you can use throughout your academic career.”

A native of North Carolina, Cody served six years in the Marine Corps, including three deployments, two in Afghanistan. After starting to work on a Communication major at Fresno State, he found himself homeless. He also faced significant challenges in dealing with fatherhood, a traumatic brain injury, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Donors of The Veterans Education Program placed Cody in the Fresno State dorms and provided support.

He roared through Fresno State, earning his Bachelor’s Degree in two years while participating fully in campus life. Cody joined the university’s debate team, was elected vice president of the Student

Veterans Organization, and served three semesters as a student senator for veterans and transfer affairs. Fresno Assemblyman Jim Patterson honored Cody as Veteran of the Year in 2017. He graduated in spring 2019 and now attends Pacific McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento with the goal of becoming a family law attorney to help veterans.

“I believe in loyalty and I want to give back to people and institutions that were there for me,” Cody says. “I wouldn’t be here without the Veterans Education Program, and I know that. I want to continue to thank them, and I hope I continue to make them proud.” ★



Trip to China

PROVIDES CULTURAL,
EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES
for Students

BY CYNDEE FONTANA-OTT



A two-week study abroad class focused on school-based interventions gave nine California State University, Fresno, students the chance to explore education and culture in Nanjing, China.

Offered through the Division of Continuing and Global Education, this international program facilitated American and Chinese students and professionals learning from each other.

Maria Guzman, who is pursuing a Master's degree in School Counseling, called it an unforgettable experience. "The class lessons made me live and experience a culture in two weeks," she said.

Hong Ni, an associate professor in Fresno State's Psychology Department, developed the course for the School Psychology program. The graduate students used Nanjing Xiaozhuang University as a home base and also took field trips to four elementary, secondary and alternative schools.

Ni described China as a place of high academic stress where performance dictates the path in life. The Chinese educational system also "puts moral development first" in a structured way, she said.

Against that backdrop, the visiting students learned about the country's holistic approach to student needs that provides the same services to everyone. That compares to the American style that more commonly tailors interventions to a specific student's needs.

For example, school counseling centers offer insulated rooms where any student can release stress by screaming or banging on

drums. Biofeedback chairs with relaxation programs are available to students, parents and teachers.

Participants from both countries presented information and asked questions of each other. By listening and discussing different approaches, Ni said, students learned how they might adapt a practice to their home country.

"They see it first-hand, learn how and what they are doing and connect that back to what they've learned in the United States," she said.

In addition, Ni said the study abroad opportunity underscores the importance of international travel and experiences and diversity in a global context.

Guzman appreciated the chance "to sit with school site professionals to discuss, share and exchange ideas about mental health and school counseling." She said learning about different cultures is particularly valuable for someone entering a profession that deals with students from many diverse backgrounds.

"It's important to educate myself about other cultures to enhance my cultural sensitivity," Guzman said.

In addition to classroom lessons, the visiting students had free time to explore the city with the help of language buddies. They shared in cultural activities such as Chinese handcraft – forming paper flowers, making Chinese knots and writing a Chinese character in calligraphy.

Hugo Ibarra, who is currently working toward a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Administration, signed up for the program to learn about the Chinese educational system and collect new ideas for interventions.

"I also wanted to experience the culture of a country by talking to people, eating their rich food and visiting their most culturally important sites," he said. Ibarra added that "interacting with Chinese students in cultural classes encouraged me to appreciate the Chinese culture more."



Katie Durham was among 854 Master's students who graduated in 2018. What makes Katie unique is she never set foot on the Fresno State campus. Katie graduated from the Water Resource Management Master's program, a fully-online degree offered by the College of Science and Math in partnership with the Division of Continuing and Global Education.

The Water Resource Management program's unique online modality allows students to take classes from anywhere. Katie was living in Texas when she applied to the Master's program. She and her family later relocated to Florida and then California, where she finished her degree. She now works at a San Diego-area water institute.

Katie is one of many graduates who hail from other parts of the country. The program has enrolled students from Utah, Virginia, Florida, and various parts of California. Some Fresno State alumni also pursue the degree. So far, 35 students have graduated from the Water Resource Management program.

The program is interdisciplinary—blending agriculture, public policy, engineering, and more—allowing students to pursue a variety of career paths upon graduation. “The program's objective is to help students decide which field to focus on by the time they reach the internship stage,” said Wendy Larson, staff support for the program. Most students are employed while completing the program, and often complete coursework on the evenings and weekends. Students apply their studies to real-world problems by completing an internship and project prior to graduation.

Sahil Pathak, a student and employee of the Division of Water Rights in northern California, finds himself using the program's lessons on remote sensing, hydrology, and urban and rural water systems in his day job. “I've enjoyed every class I've been able to apply to my work,” Sahil said. Sahil takes classes from his home in Yuba City and, like Katie, has never visited the university in person.

The lack of face-to-face interaction with students and faculty makes motivation an essential attribute for Water Resource Management students, according to Larson. Students must not only direct their own studies, but help each other prepare assignments, study for tests, and complete projects. Communication among students is facilitated by the program's format. Students enter the program in cohorts—usually 15-20 per year—and take all classes together until graduation. If personal circumstances force them to drop out—they may simply pick up with a later cohort, provided they meet university requirements to return to the program.

The Water Resource Management degree program is an essential component of Fresno State's water research efforts.

“We want Fresno State to become known as the Water University. Our research efforts — and applying that research to benefit people, communities and businesses — has us well on the way to earning that standing,” said Scott Moore, dean of Fresno State's division of Continuing and Global Education.

The Masters of Science Water Resource Management is one of the most successful degree programs offered through the Division of Continuing and Global Education with demonstrated success developing tomorrow's leaders in water management.



Finding My *Community* Abroad

BY DOUGLAS HOAGLAND

Melissa Cervantes-Reveles seized the opportunity to study abroad while a student at Fresno State. “I needed a challenge. I was so used to being here, and my routine was so repetitive,” she says.

The university’s Study Abroad Office – part of the Division of Continuing and Global Education – provided her with academic counseling and financial support. As a result, she spent the 2018-19 academic year in Spain.

“I knew there would be a lot of personal growth in studying abroad. I just needed someone to shine the light and say, ‘You can do it,’”
Cervantes-Reveles says.

In 2018-19, the Study Abroad Office awarded \$730,000 in grants and scholarships to 643 students who traveled to 26 nations for periods ranging from one week to one academic year. Fresno State excels in the California

State University system for giving that much money to support students going overseas.

Cervantes-Reveles, 22 and from Visalia, received \$2,000 for tuition and other expenses through the Study Abroad Office. She attended Universidad Complutense de Madrid, where she found rigorous classes and an international cast of friends.

She also found a new version of herself. “I pushed myself to approach people and learn something new about them,” she says. “I also put myself out there so people would ask about me. At first I was scared, but slowly I learned that people are people.”

Studying abroad produces many benefits, says Marcela Magdaleno, academic advisor in the Division of Continuing and Global Education. Students develop a bigger world view, clarify career goals, learn a new language or improve skills in a language they already know.

“We try to communicate that studying abroad is not just for certain majors,” Magdaleno says. “It’s for everybody.”

Students who’ve gone overseas help with the “internationalization” of Fresno State, says Frank Puccio, director of Finance, Administration and Global Education. “They don’t just experience different cultures but share those experiences when they come back.”

Cervantes-Reveles first learned about Study Abroad at its annual campus fair. The Study Abroad Office also uses social media and classroom presentations to promote overseas study. “The number of students going abroad is increasing every year so we must be doing something right,” Magdaleno says.

The biggest question Cervantes-Reveles had is shared by many students: Could she afford it? “I decided to address the money issue one step at a time,” she says. “I knew there would be people in the Study Abroad Office to support me.”



Cervantes-Reveles plane trip to Spain in August 2018 was her first ever. In Madrid, she shared an apartment with roommates from Spain, France and Germany. “We got to experience a little bit of each other’s cultures,” she says.

Cervantes-Reveles also traveled elsewhere in Europe using her own money. She visited France, Hungary, Ireland and Italy, and, she says, Rome was her favorite destination outside of Spain. “The people are inviting, and the food is amazing.” Her neighbors in Madrid – an Italian man married to a Venezuelan woman – gave her restaurant recommendations for Rome. “They were like my second parents,” she says, highlighting the network she developed in Spain.

At the university in Madrid, Cervantes-Reveles took classes that honed her knowledge of Spanish – a language she learned as a child. She wanted to feel more confident speaking Spanish in professional settings.

She learned her financial aid for Fresno State could help cover the cost of attending the university in Madrid. Depending which foreign universities students attend, they can use their federal and state financial assistance for tuition.

Cervantes-Reveles also got information about grants and scholarships provided by the Division of Continuing and Global Education. For example, Fresno State students studying overseas are eligible for travel grants of \$1,000 (for short-term programs) or \$1,500 (for long-term programs).

“Continuing and Global Education provides financial support to every student,” says Rishad Gandhi, coordinator of Study Abroad. “That’s not something every Study Abroad office in the California State University system can say.”

Two sources at Fresno State provide most of that money: the university’s Passport Place and Associated Students, Inc. The Passport Place processed nearly 11,000 passports last year, collecting \$35 in processing fees per passport. Associated Students Inc., the student government corporation, allocates to Study Abroad a portion of the Instructional Related Activity fee paid by Fresno State students. Additional financial support comes from scholarships provided by the Kashian, Shields, and Weise families, and until recently the Friemuth Family.

Cervantes-Reveles says she appreciates all that support.

“Study Abroad really wants you to go. They made it possible for me to make my dreams a reality.”

“I really pushed myself to improve and meet the standards there,” she says. She opted to take classes taught in Spanish, but many foreign universities offer classes in English.

Cervantes-Reveles returned to Fresno State for the 2019-20 academic year and is on track to graduate in fall 2020. The university accepted all her Madrid classes and applied them toward her majors in Psychology and Spanish. She eventually plans to earn a Master’s degree and work as a therapist helping troubled youth. “Children are the future,” she says.

But first she wants to return to Spain and teach English to young people. “I feel like I have unfinished business there,” Cervantes-Reveles says. “Spain opened my view of the world. Not only do I want to help my community here in the Valley, but my community abroad.”



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
studyabroad.fresnostate.edu

WELCOME



Nick
Carbajal



Rishad
Gandhi

The Veterans Education Program at Fresno State welcomes Nick Carbajal as its new coordinator.

While attending graduate courses, Nick volunteered as a student assistant to the Veterans Education Program, helping coordinate program operations, course scheduling, and student advising.

Nick was drafted into the Army, serving a total of 9 years both active duty and reserves as a Hike-Hercules Missile Crewman, providing guidance system maintenance. In 2019, Nick completed his Master of Arts in Higher Education, Administration, and Leadership at Fresno State.

“I have come to understand, through my own educational journey, how beneficial and invigorating support can be for student veterans managing a daunting transition process and navigating the college experience,” said Carbajal, adding, “I look forward to contributing to the success of our student veterans and expanding my role in the Veterans Education Program.”

The program’s previous coordinator, Tom Boroujeni, accepted a tenure-track job offer at Fresno City College and worked closely with Nick and the Continuing and Global Education team to transition leadership of the program.

“The Veterans Education Program is fortunate to have Nick serve as its coordinator,” said Dr. Daniel Bernard, associate dean of Continuing and Global Education.” Bernard continued, “Nick’s experience as a veteran and background in counseling provide our student veterans a unique resource as they navigate their introduction or re-entry into the university.”

Continuing and Global Education is pleased to welcome new Study Abroad Coordinator, Rishad Gandhi, who is responsible for the planning, development, and implementation of outbound international programming including semester and year-long study abroad programs, international exchange programs and faculty-led travel study programs. Gandhi grew up in Kolkata, India and moved to the United States in 2000. He received his Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Texas Christian University and his Master’s degree in Education Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Kansas.

“Our goal in the Study Abroad office is to let Fresno State students know about the many educational opportunities available to them all over the world,” said Gandhi.

“Studying in another country provides students with a global awareness that will serve them well in their future careers. We help them research and identify programs that align with their academic and personal interests, guide them through the application process, and prepare them for their study abroad,” he explained.

“We’re delighted to have Rishad join our team and help students realize the enormous benefits provided by studying abroad,” noted dean Scott Moore. “We encourage all students to investigate their options and take advantage of the scholarships and travel grants offered through our Division.” Last year, Continuing and Global Education awarded students more than \$700,000 to support their study abroad experiences.

The Study Abroad office is located in Family and Food Sciences Building, Room 119. Program information can be found on the website at <https://studyabroad.fresnostate.edu>.

CONTINUING AND GLOBAL EDUCATION WELCOMES

DANIEL BERNARD AS ASSOCIATE DEAN



After a nationwide search, Dr. Daniel Bernard has been chosen to serve as the permanent associate dean of the Division of Continuing and Global education. In his new role, Bernard has responsibilities for all Extended Education programming, including academic degrees and certificates, career development, and the downtown campus.

Daniel was raised in California's Central Valley, receiving both his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from California State University, Fresno. This upbringing provides a unique perspective to Daniel.

“I know the value of higher education in the Central Valley, and it makes me proud to provide unique access points to Fresno State. With Extended Education, Fresno State is able to reach populations in our area, not otherwise served by our university,” he said.

Bernard holds a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma and is a University of California, Berkeley Fellow, having completed Berkeley's Executive Leadership Academy.

One of Bernard's most visible programs has twice been lauded by the Board of Trustees. Bernard served as the inaugural program coordinator to the Veterans Education Program, helping design and launch the Program, which provides educational opportunities to veterans and service members who would not be able to attend Fresno State.

Dr. Scott Moore, dean of the division of Continuing and Global Education stated, “His work with the Veterans Education Program is rather remarkable. What seems to guide his success is a significant social conscious and a very gentle humanity. As a key member of my leadership team, he is on the brink of a very long, successful career as a university administrator.”

Bernard has taught at four institutions of higher education across the country. He previously served Fresno State as the Executive Director of the Division of Continuing and Global Education and a Lecturer in the College of Arts and Humanities.



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