Hello from the IO!

As this never-ending winter rages on, we hope you are keeping warm! The IO has had an exciting fall and winter—please read on for more about our latest activities.

International students contribute to their campuses and communities in many ways, including providing diverse perspectives, sharing their cultures and creating new knowledge. Lesser known, however, is the extent to which international students contribute, significantly, to the local, state and national economies. NAFSA: the Association of International Educators (a professional association you can read more about on page 4) releases annual figures on the economic impact of international students in the U.S. In the 2012-2013 academic year, international students contributed $24 billion to the U.S economy and supported 313,000 jobs! In the state of Illinois, the total contribution was $1.12 billion. Northwestern internationals contributed $118 million to the Evanston and Chicago areas. Those numbers are only expected to rise as more international students make their way to the U.S. and to Northwestern to pursue their studies. The IO is proud to make it possible for Northwestern’s international students, scholars and families to make such an impact on our community, state and nation.

Happy reading!

The International Office

New Staff at the IO

Since September, we’ve had several new staff members join us:

**Stephanie Cisneros (Advisor)** started in September—her first day was Graduate International Student Orientation! No stranger to Northwestern, Stephanie previously worked in the Office of Corporate Relations and is studying for her MA in Liberal Studies here too. A Chicago-area native, Stephanie currently lives in the nearby suburb of Park Ridge. When she’s not busy with work and school, she enjoys horseback riding, photography, speaking Italian and traveling (especially to Italy). Stephanie can’t wait for the summer and says “bring on the humidity!”

**Angelica Garcia (Program Assistant)** began at the IO in November. Originally from Papanoa, Mexico, Angelica has lived in Chicago for many years. Like Stephanie, she loves summer in Chicago and is very excited for all of the fun and free activities, including Movies in the Park, SummerDance, and outdoor concerts. Outside work, Angelica loves spending time with family & friends, writing, movies, & eating. Favorite past travel destinations include Thailand, Morocco, Mexico and Western Europe. Angelica loves “exploring new places and meeting people from different parts of the world!”

**Ariana Drule (Advisor)** is our newest staff member—she just began at the IO in March! She hails from Baia Mare, Transylvania in Romania, and currently lives in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago. Like her new colleagues, she is also eagerly looking forward to the summer and all of the free outdoor concerts. Ariana enjoys photography, traveling to sunny beach locales, natural/alternative remedies and spending time with her Welsh-Terrier Manu (who is part Romanian himself!)

The IO is also excited to host two interns this year: **Marie Monter**, a student in the Higher Education M.Ed. program at Loyola University and **Xiao Chen**, a student in the M.S. program in Higher Education Administration & Policy program at Northwestern.

Welcome to all of our new staff members and interns!
The IO continues to expand our programming calendar and have held already some very exciting events this year!

**August 2013:** We held BBQ Picnics for our international scholars and their families. Over 100 people enjoyed a warm afternoon in the IO backyard in Evanston, while 75 joined us in the sunny Lurie Atrium in Chicago. We enjoyed BBQ classics, such as burgers and watermelon.

**September 2013:** The IO welcomed over 1000 new undergraduate and graduate students at our annual fall orientations. New in 2013, our Graduate Sidekicks helped new grad students before and after their arrival.

**October 2013:** Our Spouse and Family Resource Fair expanded and included many campus and community resources. We even had a visit from NU mascot Willie the Wildcat! We also held a Halloween-themed culture shock workshop in partnership with CAPS.

**November 2013:** Launch of our Spouse and Family blog (http://international-family.com/) and Book Club, plus our Host an International Thanksgiving event (please see page 3 for more information).

**December 2013:** IO staff celebrated the holidays with a trip to Evanston’s Bottle and Bottega. Check out our paintings in our offices!

**January 2014:** We happily welcomed back NU Athletics’ Jacob Schmidt for our annual Super Bowl Workshop. Medill student Axel Boada made a media story about the event—check it out: http://youtu.be/Z1xSqObWR5S

**February 2014:** Our scholars celebrated winter with two great ice skating events: at our own Norris Center Ice Rink and under the Bean at Millennium Park.

**Up next:** a Brown Bag workshop on baseball, A St. Patrick’s Day-themed culture shock workshop (in partnership with CAPS), spring scholar events and more!
“Host an International: Thanksgiving,” celebrated its 5th anniversary with a tremendous turnout of local hosts and NU international students. The International Office was able to match 101 students and their guests with the help and support of 26 local hosts. We were able to match up every single student who signed up with a local host family. In the end we had more hosts than students! We are so thankful for the continued support of the Northwestern, Evanston and Chicago communities. We look forward to matching up even more international students and hosts in November 2014!
While the IO is a major part of the community here at Northwestern University, the IO staff are also part of a larger, international community known as NAFSA: The Association of International Educators. NAFSA is a worldwide professional organization that includes 10,000 members from over 150 countries. Members come from colleges and universities, as well as from research institutes, corporations and law firms. NAFSA aims to create a community where its members can grow professionally and ultimately develop a better environment for the international students, and international scholars whom they serve. Here is a look at how IO staff members are involved with NAFSA.

Ravi Shankar, IO Director, has been involved with NAFSA for about 20 years. He serves on the national leadership team, and is currently Chair of one of the newly created “knowledge communities,” the Leadership Development Committee (LDC). The LDC’s main charge is to identify, recruit, cultivate and orient new member-leaders to accomplish the work of the association. The committee conducts leadership opportunity sessions at national, regional and state-level conferences. Ravi has seen a new level of professionalization as a result of NAFSA’s work in the field of international education and its focus on comprehensive internationalization as a strategic tool.

Nick Seamons, IO Associate Director, serves at the regional level. He is the Chair-Elect for Region V, which includes Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Nick began his professional career with NAFSA eight years ago, working at their Washington D.C. headquarters. Specifically, Nick worked in the area of professional development, managing U.S. federal grants and programming with schools and organizations. As the Chair-Elect for Region V, he hopes to streamline communication across the three states to bring more awareness and cohesion to the region and its institutions.

Emlyn Torres, IO Advisor, is the Advocacy Coordinator for Region V. This coordinator position is new to NAFSA and only present in some of the ten regions. Emlyn’s main role is to participate in and coordinate Region V participation at NAFSA’s annual Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C. At Advocacy Day, NAFSA members learn about constituent lobbying, participate in mock meetings, and have a chance to meet with members of the House and Senate. Emlyn’s role as the Advocacy Coordinator exemplifies NAFSA’s move to bigger advocacy efforts for the global community and how those may impact her as an advisor in the IO here at Northwestern.

Finally, Debbie Kaltman, IO Advisor, serves NAFSA at the state level: she just began as the International Scholar Representative for the International Educators of Illinois. In this role, she will serve as a resource for international scholar advisors throughout the state. Additionally, she will assist the state team in planning its annual conference and help connect more professionals in the field.
Student Spotlight: Avy Faingezicht, Costa Rica

The International Office at Northwestern University advises nearly 3000 students from over 100 countries. Here is one student’s story:

Avy Faingezicht is an undergraduate international student from San Jose, Costa Rica. He had actually not heard of Northwestern until his senior year of high school, and had always planned to attend college in Costa Rica. That all changed when his brother was accepted into the MBA program at MIT, and Faingezicht decided to apply to universities in the U.S. too. He learned through his college counselor about Northwestern’s strength in engineering, as well about the unique quarter system. To Faingezicht, the (often-controversial) quarter system presented the opportunity “to study engineering and try different areas too.” After researching NU further, “right away I knew it would be a great choice for me,” he says.

A junior studying Integrated Engineering with a double major in Economics and the Kellogg Certificate in Managerial Analytics, Faingezicht is clearly taking advantage of NU’s diverse and many strengths. So far, his favorite classes have included Introduction to Complex Networks and Statistical Methods for Data Mining. He is keenly interested in big data and analytics, and found that both courses “taught highly technical but very applicable material in those areas.” In addition to his coursework, Faingezicht is actively involved in the Institute for Student Business Education (ISBE), the largest student business group on campus. He is also a member of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity.

Faingezicht is very interested in the startup and technology world. Northwestern’s proximity and “access to Chicago and its budding entrepreneurial tech scene has been awesome,” he says. He spent last summer working in coding at a startup in Silicon Valley and also enjoyed spending time in San Francisco. Additionally, he has visited his brother several times in Boston and likes the city’s “interesting mix of new and old.”

When Faingezicht returned to NU this January at the height of the subzero “Polar Vortex,” he experienced a 100 degree drop in temperature! He definitely misses the warm climate of Costa Rica but has prospered venturing out of his comfort zone. Similarly, he advises that current and future Northwestern international students “meet as many people as you can outside of your comfort zone,” as well as to “make the most of the cultural experience of being at NU.”

About the International Office @ Northwestern University

The mission of the International Office is to enrich the academic and cultural experience of Northwestern’s international students, visitors, employees, and families.

The IO advises and supports the university’s international community; educates and collaborates with campus partners; and liaises with relevant government agencies.

We advocate on behalf of our populations to promote global educational exchange in support of the university’s strategic plan.

The IO aspires to increase the visibility of international students, employees, visitors and families to enrich the broader campus community.

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