



CCIS News

Community Council for International Students

Office of Student & Scholar Services Northwestern University
Fall 2020 Vol. 3 No.1

Welcome from Our New President Mary Helen Albright

I am delighted and humbled to be the new President of CCIS. My degree in International Affairs from The George Washington University in Washington, DC did not result in a career in the Foreign Service as I had anticipated. Instead I was gainfully employed at Northwestern Memorial, leading me to an M.A. in Health and Human Services Administration, and my career.

International travel with our daughter led to her befriending international students during her college years. She married her sweetheart, who is from Japan, and they live with our grandson in Tokyo. We moved to Evanston from West Rogers Park 9 years ago, and we met Sylvia Alvino a few years later. When she heard our story, she said: "Have I got a group of great people for you!"

In this new, quite ab-normal world in which we now live, the challenges facing us are daunting. As I consider the reason I joined CCIS, it was to have personal interaction with international students. The mission of CCIS is for these interactions and activities to provide opportunities and resources to benefit and improve international students' and scholars' experience at Northwestern. We can still do that, in this socially distanced, technologically remote, ab-normal world. We can all be healthy by being safe, and we can personally interact with students and scholars, benefiting and enhancing their experience. My goal for CCIS is to adapt, to

innovate, and to continue our tradition for the students. To survive!

Thanking Norman Axelrad Our Past President

Having an Attorney as President of CCIS was providential in every sense of the word. Norm applied his considerable professional experience and indomitable perseverance to secure formal recognition for the organization and the benefits of being under the umbrella of the University. He jump-started the revival of this newsletter (including drafting much of the copy), as well as recruited current members of the Board. Not only did he spearhead the creation of the Roundtable Discussion Program and was our first facilitator, he also coordinated the efforts to produce a CCIS website to move us somewhat grudgingly into this century of technology.

Norm cajoled. He prodded. He convinced us to provide input and program outlines to compile a User Manual and Board Book, providing much of the content himself, and he was determined to standardize areas of Administration. He has been not only a Conversation Partner and Foster Relative, but also a career counselor, mentor, life coach, and friend to many students. The benefits of his most auspicious tenure will be enjoyed for a very long time by all those associated with CCIS. Norm is continuing to serve on our Board, mentor students and offer his wise counsel.

Tribute to Norman Axelrad From Frank Yian Su

Editor's Note: Frank was Norm's student and he did some projects for CCIS. He's now finished his studies and has moved on.

I want to let CCIS know how terrific CCIS is, and how meaningful it has been for my study at Northwestern. I've joined the CCIS community for around two years, during which I got the chance to learn about the culture and history of the United States. The volunteers at CCIS always make me feel welcomed. Especially thank you to my host Norman Axelrad, who gave me so much help to better accommodate both my life and study in the country. I'd strongly suggest anyone become a member of this embraced community.

Best regards,
Frank Yian Su

Northwestern In Interesting Times A message from OISS Interim Director Theresa Johnson

Dear CCIS volunteers,

Greetings from my "home office" in Chicago. The end of the previous academic year and into the summer have been extremely challenging for our international students and scholars. While many of the challenges remain, I'm hopeful that we will be able to maintain some sense of stability for the Fall term and into the rest of the 2020 – 2021 academic year. This Fall, Northwestern University and OISS will look very different than we are used to. We are not expecting as many students to be present on campus as in previous years, so we won't see the normal in-person "hustle and bustle." We do still expect to support similar numbers of new and continuing students, many of whom will remain in their home country for at least the Fall term.

Some unique challenges our students and scholars face in addition to the health and safety concerns we all face:

- 1) Due to COVID-19 there are travel bans prohibiting student/scholar travel directly into the U.S. from China, Brazil, and Iran.
- 2) U.S. consulates suspended regular visa services in March and only resumed in some consulates in July. This resulted in a large backlog of visa applications. Many U.S. consulates are still not offering visa services.

Given these challenges, many of our students are unable to return to campus for Fall term. We do expect to keep them engaged in course work and any virtual programming we can manage throughout the Fall term.

As you can imagine, Northwestern University is still operating mostly remotely for the Fall term given the COVID-19 pandemic. Some faculty, staff, and students have returned to campus for limited in person classes and essential business. OISS will remain closed for the Fall term with the exception of limited office hours for the purpose of immigration document pick up. While we aren't in the office, we are all still busy working.

VOLUNTEERS' CORNER

This section describes our current programs which will be offered this Fall primarily through Zoom. If you are continuing as an active volunteer, please work with your program coordinator or contact **Mary Helen Albright** at maryhelenchicago@gmail.com especially if you have an idea for a new program.

We expand our membership many ways including news articles and publications like this. Often, volunteers recruit new members. If you know of friends, relatives, and neighbors who might be interested in joining us, ask them to *apply at* <https://tinyurl.com/ccisvolunteer> and contact the appropriate program coordinator for the program(s) in which they are interested.

**ECP: ENGLISH CONVERSATION
PARTNERS FOR GRADUATE
STUDENTS & SCHOLARS**

HELLO,
I hope all is well with all of you. I'm reaching out to you to determine if you are still in touch with your student at all: phone, video visit, or in person 6 ft. apart.

We will have new International students coming to campus; some have already reached out for conversation help. PLEASE, do let me know if you are available for a new student match. We are eager to be helpful as much as we can.

Stay well, stay safe, stay in touch!

Doris Liberman, CCIS/ECP
adlibs4612@gmail.com

**FOSTER RELATIVES/HOST
FAMILIES**

As we get new students applying for the CCIS Foster Relative/Host Families, would you be willing again to Host? Contact Greta Sims, Co-Chair, rgsims@att.net and let her know your interest.

COOKING CLASSES

We would love to have a monthly Zoom cooking series for spouses this Fall, but we need your help for the technical aspect. Jeanne Reed has been leading this program for years. She would teach the class from home but needs technical support. If you have an interest, please contact **Jeanne** at reedupuis@comcast.net

CCIS NEWS

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Send comments, questions, and offers to help with CCIS News to Susan Doctors: skdoc1@gmail.com

**GRADUATE STUDENTS', SCHOLARS'
& SPOUSES' COLUMN**

If you are interested in any of these free services, please *apply* at <https://tinyurl.com/ccisstudent> and contact the appropriate program coordinator listed below.

FOSTER RELATIVES/HOST FAMILIES

Experience American life by spending time with locals for meals, conversation, holidays and other gatherings on Zoom and/or mutually agreed times and places. Contact **Betty Phillips, 847-477-5378, bettybphillips@gmail.com** OR Greta Sims, 847-251-3264, rgsims@att.net.

**CONVERSATION PARTNERS FOR
STUDENTS & SCHOLARS**

Interested in refining English speaking skills in a personal, informal relationship with a local volunteer on Zoom or mutually agreed upon times and places. Contact **Doris Liberman, 847-676-2932, adlibs4612@gmail.com** OR **David Whiting, 847-432-2814, cotswold@gmail.com**.

SPOUSES' CONVERSATION GROUPS

Spouses meet weekly in a group on Zoom or in person to discuss their personal experiences and improve their speaking skills. Contact **Maureen Sheehy, 847-323-3703, sheehy5@gmail.com**, OR **Mary Helen Albright, 847-868-4979, maryhelenchicago@gmail.com** for spouses only, or **Heather Hehman, 847-691-8399, heatherhehmanesl@gmail.com** for spouses with children.

SPOUSES' COOKING CLASSES

Interested in sharing cooking ideas? Contact **Jeanne Reed** at reedupuis@comcast.net.

CHICAGO CAMPUS SERVICES

Students and scholars located at the NU Downtown Campus in Chicago should **contact the Chicago program coordinator Lynne Carpenter, 847-989-0897, lynne.crpntr@gmail.com**.