

Spring 2013

International Student and Scholar Services Newsletter

Diana Howard, Editor

Western Kentucky University, diana.howard@wku.edu

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International Student and Scholar Services Newsletter

Spring 2013



Diana Howard, ISSS Outreach Coordinator and Editor



ORIENTATION

ISSS offers an extensive orientation program that addresses many issues including: immigration regulations, academic resources, course registration, cultural adjustment, WKU services and departments, upcoming social events, campus tours, housing assistance, classroom expectations, and much more. The orientation is designed to give students vital information and the necessary tools to hit the ground running on the first day of class. It also covers practical topics such as: opening a bank account, acquiring a cell phone, obtaining a driver's license, using public transportation, where to buy household items and groceries, and obtaining other U.S. services.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

At the beginning of each semester, the ISSS staff collects feedback from students to assist in designing a unique social program. With the approval of the Director, the Outreach Coordinator plans and advertises the trips and activities. Implementing this schedule is a team effort as all ISSS staff volunteer as chaperones during weekends and after hours in order to make this program a success. These trips have become quite popular amongst the student population and fill up very quickly. The activities cover a wide spectrum and include: sporting events, shopping excursions, historical tours, educational venues, entertainment and social activities. Ultimately, the students have fun and create friendships while expanding their U.S. experience. It is the goal of ISSS that the students have a positive experience at WKU which we believe is essential for both recruitment and retention.

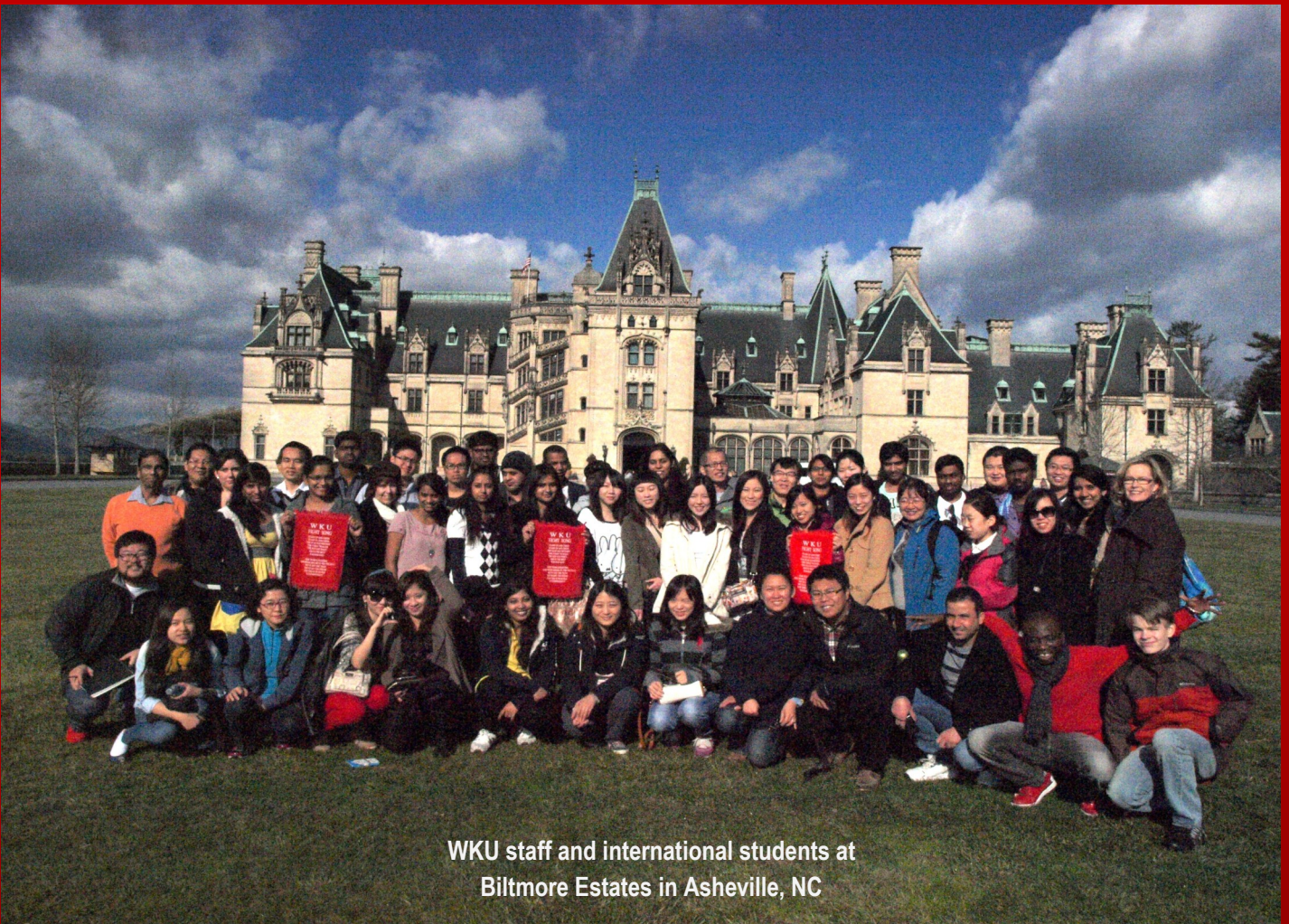
"I love to go on the trips with ISSS, because we always have lots of fun to explore this country, modern cities and traditional towns, museums and shopping malls, restaurants and skating centers, and so on. There are all kinds of activities and they enhanced my time in the United States so much! At the same time, it is great to meet some new friends from all over the world in these trips! Besides, they are all good deals, and much cheaper than going by yourself! So I will definitely recommend the trips to other international students/scholars!" stated Qian Xu, visiting Chinese scholar with the Confucius Institute.

SPRING 2013 ACTIVITIES

ROLLER SKATING - On January 19th, ISSS kicked off the semester with a trip to the local roller rink. The group of 14 students enjoyed dinner at Tsunami's and a night of roller skating. Tsunami's is a locally owned restaurant that specializes in Asian cuisine and features Vietnamese, Chinese and Japanese meals. After dinner, they skated the night away at the Skate Box. Many brave students experienced roller skating for the first time.

ICE SKATING – On February 16th, 28 students traveled to Centennial Sportsplex in Nashville, TN to ice skate. After a couple of hours of skating, the group enjoyed a Middle Eastern meal at Shish Kabobs then made quick stops at two international markets. This trip had something for everyone.... exercise, food, shopping and fun!





WKU staff and international students at
Biltmore Estates in Asheville, NC

ASHEVILLE, NC – Over spring break, ISSS took 50 students on a 3-day trip to Asheville, North Carolina. On the first day, the group enjoyed the funky, homespun shopping experience in downtown Asheville. The next day the group spent the day at the magnificent Biltmore Estate touring the home, gardens and exploring Antler Hill Village. On the third day, before heading back to KY, everyone enjoyed hiking the trails at the North Carolina Arboretum. This trip was rounded out with a shopping excursion at Opry Mills Mall in Nashville, TN on the way home to Bowling Green.

“It is my great pleasure to thank you for organizing such a pleasant trip to Asheville. I enjoyed this trip from the beginning of the journey up to the end of it.

I enjoyed viewing the mountain area of Asheville, Vanderbilt's extraordinary home and its surrounding beautiful garden, Antler Hill village and winery, etc.” stated Amin Mohammed visiting scholar from Dhaka, Bangladesh.





WKU staff and international students at 1792 Barton Distillery in Bardstown, KY

EXPLORING KENTUCKY with ISSS – On

April 6th, a group of 28 students and scholars traveled to Bardstown, KY to tour the 1792 Barton Distillery to see the entire bourbon making process. They enjoyed lunch in the historical Talbott Tavern and then journeyed to Harrodsburg, KY to visit the Pleasant Hill Shaker Village. At Pleasant Hill Shaker Village, the students were transported back in time to glimpse the lifestyle of the Shakers in this 19th century Kentucky communal village. While touring the grounds and buildings, they learned about the Shakers' unique religion, culture and lifestyle.



WKU staff and international students at The Old Talbott Tavern in Bardstown, KY

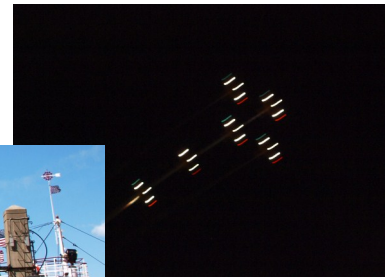


WKU staff and international students at Pleasant Hill Shaker Village in Harrodsburg, KY



WKU staff and international students at Thunder Over Louisville

THUNDER OVER LOUISVILLE – On April 20th, ISSS took a group of 28 students to Thunder Over Louisville to enjoy the kickoff event of the Kentucky Derby Festival. This event is rated as one of the top 100 events in North America. Thunder Over Louisville showcases a spectacular airshow and the largest annual fireworks display in North America. The group enjoyed exploring downtown Louisville and sharing in the festivities of the event..



Community Outreach



LOCAL SCHOOLS HOST INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

There is a trend amongst the local schools in and around Warren County to host international events to celebrate global cultures and expand the young minds of school age children in Kentucky. ISSS organizes volunteers and provides transportation to these local events. It is successful because of the generosity of our students and scholars who volunteer their time and graciously share their cultures. Our volunteers dress in their native clothing, share items from their country, and write the children's names in their native language.

"When WKU participates in local international events, it is our goal to add to the overall educational experience for the children. Our students come from all over the world to study at WKU, sharing their culture gives them a sense of pride and connection to their homeland," stated Diana Howard, International Outreach Coordinator with ISSS. "It's really an exchange of cultures, we learn from the children as they learn from us."



**International students/scholars volunteer at
Lost River Elementary School International Night**

LOST RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - On March 26th, WKU students and scholars from China, India and Saudi Arabia dressed in their traditional clothing and volunteered their time to share their cultures with the children of this elementary school. Smiles abounded as the WKU students and scholars wrote the children's names in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi and Telugu.

Lan Xu, Shana Ma and Xu Qien, scholars from the Confucius Institute, entertained and educated the children about China by sharing traditional Chinese

toys and games, clothing, Chinese map, calligraphy brush, fans, and a very popular stuffed panda. The items sparked many questions from the curious students and the children were delighted to see their names written in Chinese.

Mohammed Aldaghri and Sultan Alamri, students from Saudi Arabia, wrote the children's names in Arabic. They also shared their culture by dressing in their traditional clothing, and brought a beautiful silver coffee pot with delicious Saudi coffee and dates to share at the event.

Neelima Gajavilli and Urmila Tokekar, WKU graduate students from India, dressed in salwar kameez. Gajavilli wrote the children's names in Telugu which is her native language the southern part of India. Tokekar wrote the children's names in Hindi which is the official language of India.

"I really enjoyed sharing my native language and culture with kids. It was priceless to see their excited faces," stated Gajavilli.



**International students/scholars volunteer at
Lost River Elementary School International Night**

LOGAN COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

On April 18th, **Logan County High School** held an International Night. ISSS and student/scholar volunteers set up a booth to showcase India and China. WKU students Rahul Rasam and Siresha Kodali dressed in traditional clothing and represented India by sharing information and writing in Telugu and Hindi. Qian Xu, visiting Chinese scholar with the Confucius Institute, represented her country by dressing in traditional clothing and writing names in Chinese.



WKU staff and international volunteers at Logan County High School International Night



ISSS Graduate Assistant Neelima Gajavilli at Richpond Elementary School International Day

RICHPOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

On April 25th, ISSS spent the day at **Richpond Elementary School's** International Day sharing the Indian culture with children grades pre-school through 6th grade. Neelima Gajavilli shared her culture by dressing in traditional clothing from India and wrote the children's names in Telugu. ISSS provided a handout about India to give the children more information. To our delight, the children were very curious and eager to learn facts about India to include in their passports.





WKU volunteers for international parade at Bowling Green Hot Rods Game

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

International Parade of Flags at the Hot Rods game - On. April 13, WKU students, scholars and instructors added to the pre-game pageantry of the Bowling Green Hot Rods by participating in a procession of international flags. ISSS and the Department of Modern Languages collaborated to recruit volunteers to carry the flags. China led the way followed by Columbia, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Panama, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and United Arab Emirates. The United States of America flag was the grand finale and star of the parade, it was held high and greeted with great applause from the audience. The flags were impressive waving in the wind as they entered the field near first base and exited near third base.

