Meet an International Student

A MACEDONIAN IN HAITI

Reprinted with permission from Romel Joseph

On January 12, 2010, a 7.0 earthquake destroyed most of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Two years later, many are still struggling to get even the most basic of needs. One resilient individual, Romel Joseph, is not letting anything get in his way of his ambitions plans for “the new Haiti.”

After surviving 18 hours under the earthquake rubble of his academic and music institution, the Juilliard-trained, nearly blind violinist was re-inspired to introduce classical music to young Haitian children, but in a bigger way. His new goal: a modern performing arts center and music conservatory.

Natasha Stojanovska, a piano performance Master’s student at IU South Bend, first met Mr. Joseph in April 2008 when she participated in a music competition presented by his Miami-based institution, Walenstein Musical Organization, where she won 2nd prize. Since then, Ms. Stojanovska has been actively involved in Walenstein Musical Organization’s various events, some of them even playing alongside Mr. Joseph.

When Mr. Joseph presented Ms. Stojanovska with an opportunity to come to Haiti and perform, she gladly accepted. There, she represented her instrument in a children’s lecture concert that introduced the

WHAT IS IT?

Can you identify the object above?

A. a religious doll
B. a lucky charm doll
C. a cartoon character doll
D. or something else...

Check your answers on page 3.

FOOD FESTIVAL 2012

3-6 pm, April 14, 2012

by Chabula Mulumbu

The International Food Festival is an event held by the International Student Organization in conjunction with the Office of International Student Services. This is an annual event held here at the IU South Bend campus. Even though this is a campus event, it is open to the public.

The food festival gives an opportunity to international students to share their different cultural backgrounds with the whole of South Bend and Mishawaka. Students participate in this event by volunteering to prepare foods of their choice, from their home country and serve it to the public. Other things to look out for are students dressed in their traditional attire and cultural performances like dances, poetry and fashion shows.

Last year the Saudi Arabian students stole the show by demonstrating some of their traditional dances; other performances included belly dancing, a sharing of Asian song and dance from the Granger Dance Company, Irish dance, violin and African dance. Something to look forward to
The International Food Festival has been growing in popularity over the years, and this is not just because of media advertising. People have left this event feeling like they had been on a trip around the world for the small price of a ticket ($10/adult, $5/child 7 & under). So in addition to being on the lookout for the most charismatic performance, how many people attend the event will be something of interest as an increase in this year’s attendance will render this event a huge success for the organizers.

Students who take part get free admission and are awarded certificates for their participation by the International Student Organization. We do encourage everyone to take part as it adds to your college experience, and it’s a fun filled day for everyone.

Applications are available now and all faculty, staff and students (including students at The Language Company) are eligible to participate in performing, cooking or the cultural fashion show. You may submit your application to the OISS in person at Admin 146X or via email at oiss@iusb.edu.

Click here to download your application and submit by March 1.
**WHAT IT IS**

A religious doll

These dolls are representations of two figures in Hinduism. The blue-skinned figure represents Krishna, while the yellow-skinned figure represents his childhood friend and lifelong love, Radha.

This couple is looked to as the ideal of love and breaking down of barriers. As one author recounts it on her blog:

In a bid to bridge the complexion gap, a very innocent but naughty Krishna (dark-hued), acting on his mother Yashoda’s advice, had drenched His beloved Radha (fair-hued) in color and water! This slowly evolved into the festival of Holi and continues to mask all boundaries of class, caste, age and gender till date!

It doesn’t matter if you are black or white; the splash of colors makes everything bright!

Read more about Holi on the next page.

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**Philatelists Welcome in the Chinese New Year**

Have you celebrated the beginning of year 4710 yet? Philatelists, better known as stamp collectors, throughout the world will be celebrating by ordering this year’s commemorative stamps.

The US Postal Service began issuing new stamps in honor of the Chinese lunar calendar in 2008 and is very happy to be offering another stamp for the Year of the Dragon.

Click here to see how you can order this year’s USPS stamp.

In China, however, the commemorative stamp has created some controversy due to the “ferocious” appearance of the dragon.

The year of the Dragon is eagerly anticipated and considered the luckiest of the signs, even leading to an increased birth rate throughout Eastern Asia in hopes of it offering their children additional blessings and opportunities.

Click on the image below to read more about the controversial choice for the Chinese stamp.
TAX PREP FOR INTERNATIONALS

All students in F-1 or J-1 status and their F-2 or J-2 dependents, who have lived in the U.S. for less than 5 years, are considered “non-resident aliens” for tax purposes and must file a Form 8843 with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), regardless of whether anyone has been employed in the U.S. or received any other income from a U.S. source.

In addition, students in the above immigration status, who have lived in the U.S. for less than 5 years and received any kind of U.S. income, should file a tax return Form 1040NR (or 1040NR-EZ) with the IRS. Please note that the NR on the forms stands for “non-resident.” These tax forms and directions for completion are available online at the IRS Web site: http://www.irs.gov/.

Students holding asylee, refugee, or permanent resident status, or those holding F and J status in their 6th year of U.S. residency, are likely considered “resident aliens” for tax purposes. Using the following links to the IRS’ green card test and substantial presence test, a person may determine status for tax purposes: http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=96392,00.html.

Those that meet the requirements to be considered a resident alien for tax purposes may file the same tax return forms that a U.S. citizen would file to report income (the 1040—not the 1040NR).

Remember that there are a number of online tax return preparation services available, but students must make a careful determination with regard to status for tax purposes before selecting a service.

Assistance in Filing a Tax Form

Although OISS staff cannot provide tax advice, we are investigating the purchase of tax return preparation software, which students admitted to IU South Bend through the OISS will be eligible to use in order to prepare the 8843, and if required, the 1040NR or 1040NR-EZ. We will present two information sessions regarding how to access the software and documents required:

10:30 a.m., March 2, Fireside Room
3:30 p.m., March 6, Admin 220B

International students may also opt to access the appropriate tax forms and directions online through the IRS Web site listed above and complete the forms independently. Keep in mind that if your tax situation is a complex one involving income from investments and a variety of sources, it may be prudent to meet with a professional tax consultant.

HOLI: THE FESTIVAL OF COLORS

by Chabula Mulumbu

Holi is the Hindu festival that is celebrated primarily in India, Pakistan and Nepal. But with the worldwide spread of people practicing Hinduism, Holi is now slowly becoming a global celebration. As it is celebrated at the end of the winter, Holi is also known as the spring festival. The celebration is a very colorful one and involves people throwing colored powder and colored water at each other. The eve of the festival is also celebrated by the lighting of bonfires and reciting of prayers. Generally the celebration is a fun-filled event carried out in the streets and people get to show their mischievous side. Special foods are cooked and the whole community is involved in this celebration. Countries like India and Nepal have become big tourist destinations as they share this part of Hindu culture.

Through the celebration the significance of Holi is not lost. In addition to welcoming spring, it is also associated with many Hindu legends of good triumphing over evil, the most common of which is the story of Prahlad. Prahlad was the son of the demon king Hiranyakashyap. Prahlad was taken into the flames by the demoness Holika for refusing to worship his father, but instead she was consumed by the flames and he survived unharmed because of his devotion to Vishnu.


Image by Roel Wijnants on Flickr
family and piano, performing various arrangements of easily recognizable Haitian folk songs, as well as Christmas music to get the 200 students in the spirit of the holidays! In addition, Ms. Stojanovska also blew the audience away with her brilliant rendition of Chopin’s Andante Spianato & Grand Polonaise at an afternoon concert for the general public of Haiti. Her contribution was extremely vital and truly made quite a positive difference in the lives of those present at these programs.

Mr. Joseph is already planning many more concerts throughout the United States and Haiti with hopes to continue spreading awareness of Haiti’s need for a performing arts center, raising funds, and exposing underprivileged children to classical music. His new non-profit 501(c)3 organization, Friends of Music Education for Haiti, was founded with this sole mission. As Mr. Joseph states in his autobiography, The Miracle of Music, “I’m not going to let an earthquake stop me from doing my work. Yes, the people of Haiti desperately need food, water, and shelter, but their social and cultural needs must be met, as well.

“Natasha is really an amazing person and musician. She is actually coming down to Miami during her spring break to help record a Haitian/French music album I put together for beginning violin students.”

For more information about FMEH, Mr. Joseph’s initiatives, and how you can help, visit www.friendsofmusicforhaiti.org, find them on Facebook (search “FMEH) and or follow them on Twitter (@FMEH_Haiti).

"I have known Mr. Joseph for a couple of years now and the reason why I gladly agreed to join Mr. Joseph and his musicians on the Haiti trip in December, is because I have always enjoyed working with them. and I believe they are wonderful musicians and I really appreciate all that they do, I simply admire their work ... building and introducing a new musical world in Haiti and ... spreading their ideas throughout America, as well."

-Natasha Stojanovska

Have you met Ebise Gideon?

As part of a new effort to reach out to international students, the OISS has launched a YouTube page and is currently featuring one of our Scandinavian students, Ebise Gideon.

Ebise’s video has already been seen by many students in Norway during Connie’s trip there in early January (see the article on the next page).

Click on the image to hear what Ebise has to say about IU South Bend and her experiences here.
“It was in that time when I walked around hungry in Kristiania, that strange city no one can leave without being marked by it.”

Knut Hamsun, from the book *Hunger*

Kristiania was founded as Oslo in 1050, reclaiming its original name in 1925, but few people today wander its streets pining for sustenance. Indeed, my recent trip to Norway to participate in a 3-day education fair was a full-plate experience. The fair was a gathering of universities from around the world with thousands of young Norwegians walking among the brochure racks, searching for that right path toward academic success, social well-being, and a life-long vocation. Each day I rode the rail back and forth to Lillestrøm, a few minutes north of Oslo, taking in the marvels of a Nordic winterscape and looking ahead to the days when we might welcome a few more Scandinavians to the IU South Bend community.

Next month, then, it’s Asia on the menu with a trip to Malaysia and China (Guangzhou, Beijing, and Shanghai) for a round of education fairs and visits to schools with which we enjoy transfer agreements.

Would you like to welcome an international student to IU South Bend? Look for details in this newsletter and in our “OISS Weekly” email updates about how you can serve as an international student ambassador and mentor.

Every culture has communities that receive benefits based solely on parts of their identity. In the US, these privileges are often difficult to discover under layers of societal norms and expectations. Faculty, staff and students are invited to take a tour of the “House of Privilege” at IU South Bend from March 26-March 29.

Participants tour a “house” where, in each room, they experience a scenario based on a specific form of privilege. (Religious privilege, American privilege, heterosexual privilege, white privilege, economic privilege, housing privilege etc.).

Each room of the “house” also holds “Windows of Opportunity;” providing a view of actions that participants can take to address privilege and embrace difference. Students debrief at the end of the tour with trained facilitators.

Interested in volunteering behind-the-scenes of this new campus event or bringing your club or organization? Get more information on the website at www.iusb.edu/hop.
On-Going Orientation
Special events designed to help international students get to know IU South Bend and the Surrounding Community:

February 3, 10:30 a.m.
Finances for Internationals
Fireside Room (in The University Grill)

February 10, 10:30 a.m.
Academic Resources at IU South Bend
Fireside Room

February 24, 10:30 a.m.
Employment as an International Student
Fireside Room

Exploring American & World Cultures through
UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2
7 - 9 p.m.
Balthaser Poetry Reading
Wiekamp 3rd floor Bridge

February 3
10:30 a.m.
Finances for Internationals
Fireside Room

Noon
Small serving of “Feminist Theory and Feminist Philosophy”
DW 2170

5-9 p.m.
“Shiver on the River”
Downtown South Bend

February 7
3:30 p.m.
OPT Information Session
Admin 220B

February 8
Noon
Disney College Program Info Meeting
DW 1001

February 9
7 p.m.
Talk, “Virtuous Words: Arguments & Ethics in the University w/ Prof John Duffy
DW 1001

9 p.m.
Red & White Dance (semi-formal)
The University Grill

Looking for more events? Visit our events page at www.iusb.edu/oiss/events or view the campus calendar.

KANGA
International Education and Exchange

Would you like to hear the voice of an international student in your classroom, staff meeting, club meeting or community group?

Kanga volunteers are graduate and undergraduate students interested in sharing their knowledge and talents, together with their cultural perspectives and traditions through discussions, panels, performances, demonstrations, and multi-media presentations. Faculty, staff, and community members are encouraged to collaborate with Kanga volunteers to create activities that enhance curricula and engage campus and community members in an intercultural exchange of ideas, skills, and experiences.

Kanga volunteers promote cultural understanding while at the same time developing public speaking and interpersonal skills on the way to becoming true “global citizens.” Are you ready for a new outlook on the world? Consider becoming a Kanga volunteer or intercultural activity facilitator.

Joining Kanga as a student volunteer?
Download the sign-up form here. (Scholarship holders, this is a great way to fulfill expectations for service to the community.)

Interested in having a student come to talk with your group?
Requests should be made at least one week in advance. Download the request form here.

Why “Kanga?”

Kangas, large squares of colorful, patterned fabric, serve communities in many African countries as traditional dress for women, napkins for meals, diapers and carriers for babies, and hundreds of other ways.

Each kanga includes a proverb, usually in Swahili, that can communicate any number of things. The garment has a rich history of passing from culture to culture. The kanga, as an artifact, serves as a great metaphor for our speaker’s bureau: communication, cultural exchange, handcrafted artifacts, rich combinations, multi-purpose.

Click here to read an article on how kangas are “doing the talking” in many regions of the world.