March, Let Spring Begin!

As spring slowly starts to reveal itself, stay connected with upcoming ISS programs and events!

Above photo is from the St. Louis Aquarium trip, students explored the underwater life.
FEBRUARY EVENTS

International Mother Language Day

International Mother Language Day is a worldwide annual observance held on 21 February to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism. ISA celebrated by inviting others to share their mother languages for a collaborative video to share with fellow UIS students and faculty.

Pancake Monday

For pancake Monday, students were welcomed to play games, enjoy unlimited pancakes, and learn the origins of this celebration around the world.

St. Louis Aquarium

Students traveled to St. Louis Aquarium to learn and observe an assortment of fish.
If it’s March, it must be Spring Break!

Whether you are participating in one of the many Spring Break projects sponsored by UIS, taking a trip with friends to explore warmer parts of the US, getting those postponed class assignments done, or just taking a much needed rest, we hope that Spring Break is everything that you expected it to be and more. When you get back, there will only be 8 weeks left in this semester. It will be over before you know it.

For some of you, this is your very first semester and you will be proud of all that you have accomplished in such a short time. For others, you are half-way through your program and are beginning to think about how to finish strong and what may come next. And, for some, this is it. You will be done with your degree and moving on. Whichever is true for you, make the most of the second half of spring 2020.

Allow me to address a few immigration-related “housekeeping” issues. Get out your form I-20 and look at the program end date. If it matches your plans, you are good to go. If the end date is sooner than you expected, and you will not finish by that date, talk with your academic advisor and request your program extension (via iStart) as soon as you know your actual final term. While you are at it, check the expiration dates on your passport (ID page) and visa. If those will expire before you are finished with them, make plans to renew your passport (via your country’s embassy in the US) and to get a new visa (outside the US) the next time you travel. And, speaking of travel, if you plan to leave the US this summer, it is not too soon to get that travel signature on page 2 of your form I-20.

Have you registered for your classes for your next term? You will want to do that as early as possible in order to get the best choice of courses and schedule. Talk to your academic advisor about that, too. If your next term will be your final term and you do not need a full course load to finish, go ahead and request your Reduce Course Load authorization (via iStart) once you have completed your registration.

Best,
Rick Lane
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:
Waheed O. Ogunwale

Major: Master’s of Public Health
What country are you from?: Nigeria
Spoken Languages: English & Yoruba (a local dialect)
What hashtag best describes you?: #Consistency
Tell us about yourself – hobbies, interests: Surfing the Internet & watching Football
What is your dream job?: Pathologist
Describe your home country and what you like best about it:
Nigeria is often referred to as “Giant of Africa” in that it has the largest population and economy in Africa. It is an important location for black cultural identity. Nigeria has many tourist attractions due to its multi-ethnicity, and the consequent rich and diverse cultures. Tourist attractions include Erin-Ijesha waterfalls in the west, Obudu mountain resort in the south, the Surame cultural landscape in the north, and the Ogbunike Caves in the east amidst others. It’s blessed with human and natural resources. What I like the best about Nigeria are Nigerians, who are one of the most optimistic and happiest people on earth despite challenges.
What do you like best about Springfield?:
Springfield is a cool and peaceful place to live in. It houses adorable tourist sites being the home of Lincoln. It is a small tall town with big city benefits being the capital city of Illinois.
Were you involved in any clubs, organizations, or campus employment while at UIS? If so, please describe which club, organization, or employment and what you enjoyed or learned.: I presently work as a graduate assistant for the Public Health Department. Besides that, I’m a member of the Public Health Student Association. As a graduate assistant and a student club member, I have been involved in liaising with students, faculty members, and health agencies increasing awareness of diseases and events that are public health importance such as cancer and hepatitis B; these have improved my organizational and communication skills. Why did you choose UIS?:
UIS is one of the university of Illinois systems where most students have the opportunity to gain professional experiences as students. This University prepares students in advance to achieve their career goals.
What tips could you offer new students?:
Try to achieve balance between your course of study and extracurricular-curricular activities. Tap into opportunities of interest that come your way. Be consistent.
Hinamatsuri, or the doll festival, is observed on March 3 to celebrate female children and pray for their continued health and happiness. During the holiday, also known as momono sekku (peach festival), families display ceramic dolls dressed in the ornate, decorative robes of the ancient imperial court. The manufacturing of these figurines remains a thriving example of traditional Japanese craftwork. These are displayed on a red-carpeted, stepped platform called a hinadan. On the top step are the central figurines of the festival, the male odairisama and female ohinasama. These figures, said to represent members of the imperial family, are waited on by the sannin kanjo (three court ladies), gonin bayashi (five musicians), and other attendants who sit, along with such court regalia as sake cups and elaborate chests of drawers, on lower steps. The dolls and regalia together are known as hinakazari. They can vary from simple affairs of only a couple steps to elaborate, multitier displays. They originated in the court culture of Kyoto and first began spreading across the nation in the eighteenth century. In the days leading up to the festival, households with young daughters display the ornately dressed figurines prominently, where they can be admired by family members and guests. However, once the festival is finished, custom dictates that dolls and decorations be quickly packed away, as it is believed that leaving them out too long will harm a daughter's chances of marriage. Join us in celebrating on March 2 in the LRH Great Room between 3-5pm.
International Women's Day
March 8, 2020

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day has occurred for well over a century, with the first IWD gathering in 1911. The day is not country, group or organization specific - and belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. International Women's Day is all about unity, celebration, reflection, advocacy and action - whatever that looks like globally at a local level. But one thing is for sure, International Women's Day has been occurring for well over a century - and continues to grow from strength to strength. Learn about the values that guide IWD's ethos. Internationally, purple is a color for symbolizing women. Historically the combination of purple, green and white to symbolize women's equality originated from the Women's Social and Political Union in the UK in 1908. Purple signifies justice and dignity. Green symbolizes hope. White represents purity, but is no longer used due to 'purity' being a controversial concept.
International Circle is a group for international students only where members discuss concerns or issues that they may be experiencing and can expect to receive and provide support, encouragement, and feedback. An added benefit is that it will provide a safe space to discuss concerns related to the international student experience, which includes topics such as school, family, meeting new people, and other life experiences that only an international student can understand.
UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2 - Hinamatsuri, LRH Great Room, 3pm - 5pm
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day Informational Table, North Entrance at Student Union, 11am - 2pm
April 3 - Etiquette Dinner Workshop, Student Union Ballroom, 5:30pm - 7:30pm
May 8 - Congratulatory Ceremony, Student Union Ballroom, 2pm - 4pm

WALK-IN HOURS

Monday: 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Tuesday: 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Wednesday: 9:30 am - 11:30 am
Thursday: 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm