



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES NEWSLETTER



From the Director's Desk

It is here already!

The last month of the year and of the fall semester has arrived. Congratulations on a semester well done! You deserve the upcoming break and some days to relax.

As you finalize your plans, keep in mind that there are some immigration-related issues that you need to handle.

If you are completing your program of studies, check to make sure that your form I-20 has the current semester end date. If not, please contact us so that we can shorten your program. If you plan to apply for OPT, you should not wait any longer. USCIS is currently taking approximately 2 months to process those applications. If you will be continuing your education, either at UIS or at another school, be sure that you obtain your next level form I-20.

If you are not completing your program and plan to continue at UIS or elsewhere, it is important to make sure that the end date on your form I-20 is not this term but a term out in the future. If not, and you need a program extension or a transfer out, be sure to notify us before the end of this term.

If you are travelling outside the US during the break, check your passport expiration date, your visa expiration date, your I-20 program end date, and the date of the last travel signature on page 2 of the I-20. If any of these are out of date, you will want to make plans to update them in order for you to return to the US in January. See the travel page on our website for additional information: <https://www.uis.edu/iss/life-usa/travel>

If you are returning in the spring or joining us for the first time, course registration is open. You will want to register for your spring courses as soon as possible, as those are filling quickly. If spring is your final term and you need less than a full course load to complete your program, please submit your request for authorization for a Reduced Course Load via iStart after you have registered for your courses and before the start of the spring term.

That is a lot of immigration-related stuff. Get it done now. The Office of International Student Services will be closed from December 23 through January 3. We will re-open on January 4. During the break we will not be processing any student requests. If you find yourself in an actual immigration-related emergency situation due to circumstances beyond your control, you may call the UIS Police at their non-emergency number and they will contact one of the DSOs to assist you. Keep in mind that a failure to plan well on your part does not necessarily constitute an immigration emergency, and we may choose to handle the case following our return to the office.

We do hope that you have a restful and joyful holiday and look forward to seeing all of you again next month.

Rick

STAFF

Director:

Rick Lane (He / Him)

Immigration Specialists:

Rachael Matingi (She/Her)

Tracy Rakes (She/Her)

Joel Short (He/Him)

Jolene Vollmer (She/Her)

Program Coordinator:

Erika Suzuki (She/Her)

Graduate Assistant:

Claudia Falcon (She/Her)

Student Employees:

Valentine Bosenko (He/Him)

Lynise Gutierrez (She/Her)

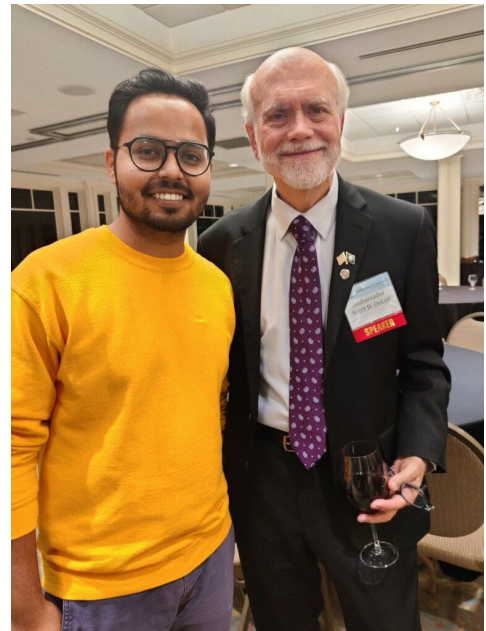
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ISS's NOVEMBER EVENTS

International Education Week - November 14-18th



Redefining Nepal: Two Ambassadors Perspectives

This event was developed on November 16th as a part of the IEW 2022 . Nepal's Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Sridhar Khatri, and retired American Ambassador Scott DeLisi (former Ambassador to Nepal) joined members of the World Affairs Council of Central Illinois for a discussion. They shared their perspectives on the unique challenges Nepal faces as it continues its transition from what was once the world's only Hindu kingdom to a federal democratic republic. Today's Nepal is redefining itself as political entity, as an actor in an evolving global economy, and as a nation state in a world where geographic boundaries no longer define our reach or our role. But Nepal must also balance the legacy of ancient cultural traditions on one hand, against the aspirations and attitudes of an Instagram and TikTok generation that make up over half the society, on the other hand. It promises to be a lively and thought-provoking discussion.

Before his current appointment as Nepal's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States and other regional countries, Professor Khatri served as Executive Director of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) in Kathmandu, Nepal from 2005-2012. Formerly, he was Executive Director, Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Executive Director, Institute of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu, Nepal. Ambassador Khatri was a professor who taught and worked in various capacities at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, for over 27 years. He also authored articles that have been published nationally and internationally.

Ambassador Scott H. DeLisi served as the Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda (2012-2015), Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, (2010-2012) and as Ambassador to the State of Eritrea (2004-2007). He also served as Deputy Chief of Mission of the American Embassy in Gaborone, Botswana. Ambassador DeLisi was the recipient of various awards including two Presidential Rank Awards, the Charles E. Cobb Award for Initiative and Success in Trade Development, the James Clement Dunn Award for Excellence, the DIA Director's Award, and four Superior Honor and two Meritorious Honor Awards. DeLisi currently serves as the Executive Director of Engage Nepal, a non-profit serving the people of Nepal.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Tina Charles Mbakwe-Obi

My pronouns are she/her. I speak both English and Igbo (my mother tongue). My major is Management information system. I am from Nigeria, which is one blessed country with talented young individuals and Natural Resources. However, my country at this moment is tackling bad leadership and governance which has produced ripple effect especially on the country's economy. In the mist of all that we are resilient and hardworking." Naija no dey carry last" is our motivational watch word. My favorite food in Nigeria is Jollof rice with coleslaw but in the USA, I will always go for seafood with vegetable Salad. Hashtag that describe me is #takeaction. My hobbies are taking short online free courses in different academic fields just to have an idea on what it's all about. I love reading, I like to help a lot, I watch movies and exercise. I am interested in any humanitarian projects and innovative ideas that helps in improving the lives of people. My favorite movie is LEAN ON ME. Kindness is my watch word in my day-to-day relationship with others. This was the theme of the movie. My dream job is information system analyst. I choose UIS because of its excellent communication towards international students. Before UIS I had applied to 5 universities in the US and got admitted to all of them. UIS was in contact with me from the moment my application was submitted till I landed in the US. UIS gave me all the Guidance I needed concerning my Academics and housing and has been my home away from home. The ambience is very welcoming, the staff and professors are very kind and understanding. It's been a surreal experience so far. Truly UIS was and still is the perfect place for me. Leadership lived here. I hope to begin work with student union office this month. I will no doubt extend the wonderful treatment received from UIS to all intending students. I also hope to take on any further activities available on campus. This is one way of giving back to the UIS community. I will encourage new students to readily choose UIS. UIS makes learning easy and life bearable especially for young mothers with kids. I have no regret choosing UIS. After UIS I hope to return to my home country with my additional qualification which will not only set me apart among my peer but will also open greater opportunities for me in my new field of study.



World Celebrations

December 05-06—St. Nicholas Eve / Sinterklaas Day: The feast of Sinterklaas celebrates the name day of Saint Nicholas on 6 December. The feast is celebrated annually with the giving of gifts on St. Nicholas' Eve (5 December) in the Netherlands and on the morning of 6 December, Saint Nicholas Day, in Belgium, Luxembourg, and northern France. The tradition is also celebrated in some territories of the former Dutch Empire, including Aruba. Sinterklaas is an elderly, serious man with white hair and a long, full beard. He wears a long red cape or chasuble over a traditional white bishop's alb (a garment coming down to the ankles). He traditionally rides a white horse and carries a big book that tells whether a child has been good or naughty in the past year.



December 08—Bodhi Day: It is celebrated in Japan. The Chinese version is called the Laba Festival and is held on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month of the Chinese calendar (December or January, but usually January). This day honors the enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama. According to tradition, Siddhartha had recently forsaken years of extreme ascetic practices and resolved to sit under a peepal tree and simply meditate until he found the root of suffering, and how to liberate oneself from it.



December 13—Santa Lucia Day: Santa Lucia (St. Lucy) was a young girl in Syracuse, Sicily, who lost her life during the persecution of Christians in the early 4th century. There's little known of her except that she was brave. But legends grew over time. It's believed she brought food to Christians hiding in the catacombs. She used a candle-lit wreath to light her way, leaving her hands free to carry food. Another story states that she had vowed her life to the service of Christ.



November, December: Chanukah / Hanukkah: Although Chanukah is a minor Jewish holiday, it's the best known to non-Jewish people. This is due in part to its proximity to Christmas. Chanukah (Hanukah or Hanukkah) begins on the 25th day of the Hebrew month Kislev, November or December. Chanukah means "dedication," and it celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. It lasts for eight days, and like other Jewish holidays, it begins at sundown.



December 21—Yule: Yule has been celebrated since the 4th century. This midwinter festival lasts for twelve days, beginning on the Winter Solstice (usually December 21). Yule has been linked to the Old Norse word jól. The word may have originally meant "magic" or "feast of entreaty." It's also perhaps the root of the English word "jolly." The term Yuletide first cropped up around 1475.



December 25—Christmas: Christmas is celebrated all over the world and in many different ways. Christmas originated as Christes Maesse, a religious festival to celebrate the birth of Jesus held on the Bethlehem plains. However, a date to celebrate this illustrious occasion wasn't ordained until 350 CE. Although some believe it's been celebrated since 98 CE. Julius I, Bishop of Rome, chose December 25 to commemorate the occasion.



December 26-January 01 - Kwanzaa: Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday celebrating black heritage. It was founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga with the hope to educate his people about African-American struggles and their rich cultural heritage. The holiday lasts for seven days and binds the African harvest customs and the social history of African-Americans. Families and friends gather at meal time. The unity cup is passed from person to person with each one saying something positive about the African-American community. Next, the candles of the kinara are lit and the principles are recited. Everyone talks and dances as the family joins together to rejoice in their heritage.





HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

AT HOME

- ◇ Place gifts where they cannot be seen from a window or doorway.
- ◇ Light the exterior of your home around doors, windows, and driveway; also trim hedges and trees around doors and windows.
- ◇ Use only fire resistant ornaments and make sure holiday lights are in good working order. Turn off tree lights at night and when gone.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

- ◇ Shop before dark when possible and shop with a friend. Never park in an unlit area or parking lot no matter how convenient it is.
- ◇ Lock your purchases in your trunk. Keep your vehicle doors locked and windows closed. Park under or near a light source.
- ◇ Don't overburden yourself with packages. Have your car keys ready, in hand, when walking to your vehicle. If possible, carry a cell phone for use in case of an emergency.

HOLIDAY PARTY SAFETY

- ◇ If you plan to drink, bring along a designated driver or set aside —cab fare. Control your alcohol intake and remain with friends.
- ◇ If you are hosting a party, have non-alcoholic beverages available; —also have alternative transportation available for intoxicated guests.





OLD CAPITOL HOLIDAY WALKS EVENTS

Each year, Downtown Springfield and locally-owned shops pull out all of the stops for the most magical time of the year– the Old Capitol Holiday Walks! They offer a month full of holiday cheer that the whole family can enjoy from November 26th–December 21st! You can find more information on the Downtown Springfield, Inc. website:

<https://www.downtownspringfield.org/holiday-walks/>

MIDWEST SLEIGH RIDES Saturdays 2-7pm & Wednesdays 4-7pm	ABE & MARY LINCOLN SATURDAYS November 26 12-4pm & December 3, 10, & 17 11am-5pm
ENTERTAINMENT ON OLD STATE CAPITOL PLAZA Saturdays at 11am, 1pm, & 3pm	FREE SMTD DOWNTOWN SHUTTLE Saturdays 11am–5pm
WINTER FARMERS MARKET December 17 8am–12pm	HOLIDAY TREE PROVIDED BY ACE SIGN CO November 26 at 4pm
LINCOLN LIBRARY BOOK TREE AND CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES Winter Wonderland Crafts on December 17 10am–12pm Library-Wide Scavenger Hunt on Wednesdays 10am–8pm & Saturdays 10am-5pm Teen Zone on December 17 10am–12pm Teen Winter Cookie Decorating on December 14 6-7pm Silly Sweater Bingo on December 21 3-4pm	VISIT SANTA AT THE OLD STATE CAPITOL November 26 11am–1pm, 1:30-4:30pm, 4:30-6pm December 3 11am–1pm, 1:30-4:30pm December 10 11am–12pm, 5-7pm December 17 11am–1pm, 1:30-4:30pm, 5-7pm Wednesdays 4-7pm
ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM ACTIVITIES & FESTIVITIES Children's Arts & Crafts on Wednesdays 4-7pm & Saturdays 10am–7pm Desserts with the Sugar Plum Fairy on December 10 3-5pm PJ's & Storytime with Mrs. Claus on December 21 5-7pm	ICE SKATING RINK PRESENTED BY SANGAMON CEO Wednesday-Friday 5–8pm & Saturdays 11am–7pm
JAYCEES HOLIDAY LIGHTS PARADE December 3 at 5:30pm	LIGHTED SMTD BUS Wednesdays & Saturdays 4-7pm
KIDZEUM CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AND HOLIDAY DECORATIONS Saturdays 9am–7pm & Wednesday 4–7pm	THE NUTCRACKER AT THE ALPLM'S UNION THEATRE Wednesdays & Saturdays 5:30pm
WINTER NIGHTS AT THE ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM Ghost in the Library on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5:15 & 6:15pm Museum Gift Shop, open until 7pm Cafe Space & Children's Activity Tables on Wednesdays & Saturdays 4-7pm	ILLINOIS PRODUCTS HOLIDAY MARKET December 2 4-9pm December 3 11am–6pm December 4 11am–4pm
DANA-THOMAS HOUSE FESTIVITIES Crafts in the Carriage House on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5-7pm Cocoa in the Courtyard on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5-7pm Luminary Nights House Tours on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5, 5:30, 6, & 6:30pm	OLD STATE CAPITOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES Kid's Craft Corner on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5-7pm Hot Cocoa Bar on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5-8pm Gift Wrapping on Wednesdays & Saturdays 5-8pm
GOVERNOR'S MANSION TOURS Saturdays at 1, 2, 3, & 4pm	



International Students Services Office

FIND US:

University of Illinois
Springfield— One University
Plaza, MS HRB 10
Springfield, IL 62703-
5407

CONTACT US:

Phone: 217-206-6678

Email: ISS@uis.edu

[On Facebook](#)



Walk-In Hours

If you need to speak directly with an immigration specialist, you can come during walk-in hours, or email ISS@uis.edu to make an appointment.

Monday-Thursday
2:00-4:00pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◇ **Christmas around the world: December 2 @
Union North Entrance.**



ISS Closed for Holidays

Please note, the ISS office will be closed Friday, December 23rd, 2022, through Monday, January 2nd, 2023.

We will resume normal hours on Tuesday, January 3rd. If you have plans to travel over the break, please make sure have an updated travel signature.