

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT  
SERVICES NEWSLETTER**

May 2023

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**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE :**

<b>ISS Past Events</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>International Student Spotlight</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Travel Signature</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Aluyor Brothers Story</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AA &amp; PI Heritage Month</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	<b>7</b>

**FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK :**

There are only a few days left in this semester. That means a lot of different things, depending upon how far along you are in your studies.

Let's start with those of you who are completing your programs this month. Congratulations! You made it and deserve to have your accomplishments recognized. There will be a special Congratulatory Ceremony for you on May 12 in the Student Union ballroom. The Chancellor will be there to share with you her words of congratulations, and I will present each of you with a colorful cord that you can wear with your regalia during the graduation ceremony on May 13. If you have family visiting for your graduation, they are also welcome to join us for the Congratulatory Ceremony.

Also, for those finishing their studies this month, don't forget to check all your immigration documents and to make sure that you have your plans finalized for whatever is coming next – touring the US, traveling home, starting a new course of study, or OPT. And, if you were planning to complete your program this term but something happened to prevent

that, be sure to submit your extension request as soon as possible.

For those of you continuing with us this summer and/or fall, you should already be registered for your classes. Those are filling up quickly. Remember: We are back to the pre-COVID regulations. That means that of the courses counting toward your full-time enrollment requirement, only one can be online. The rest must be on campus and face-to-face. Summer enrollment is not required for those continuing in the fall. So, you can take on campus courses, on-line courses, or no courses at all.

You may remain in the US or travel abroad. If you will be leaving the US, you should already have obtained a travel endorsement on page 2 of your form I-20. If not, submit that request today. Be sure to also check that both your passport and visa are valid for your re-entry prior to the fall term. As you make your travel plans, note that classes will begin August 25, and you will need to be back in the US prior to that date.

Also, for those continuing in the fall, if you will not need

a full course load in order to complete your program during the fall term, you should request authorization for a Reduced Course Load prior to registering for your fall classes. We will not be able to register your SEVIS record for fall if you do not have either a full course load or the RCL.

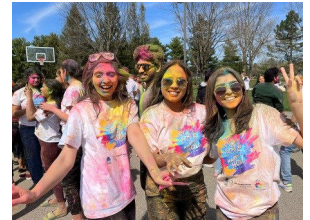
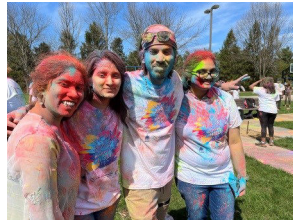
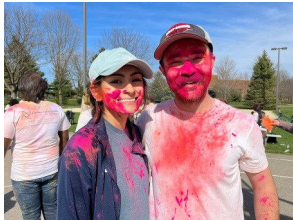
Finally, a word for those of you who will be joining us in the fall for your first term of study: We are very much looking forward to meeting you in person at New International Student Orientation on August 23. You are allowed to arrive in the US up to 30 days prior to that date. Make your housing arrangements and your travel plans as soon as you have your visa. Also, remember to upload a copy of the visa via iStart so that we can remove your registration hold and you can register for your classes. Some programs are going to be packed full this fall. Don't put off your registration any longer than you must.

**Have a wonderful summer!**

**Rick**

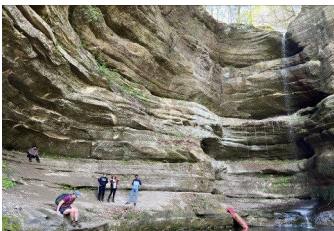
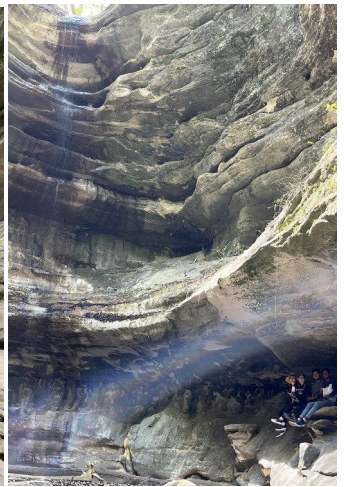
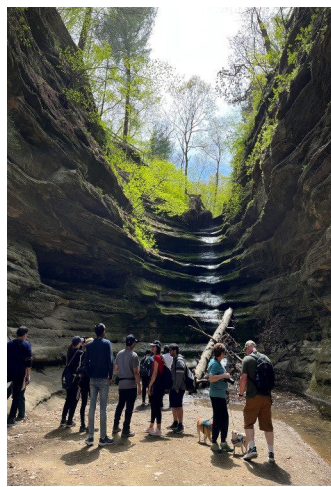
## ISS PAST EVENTS

### HOLI/FESTIVAL OF COLORS 2023—APRIL 7TH



Students celebrated Holi, colorful Hindu festival, and they had so much fun!

### HIKING AT STARVED ROCK STATE PARK—APRIL 28TH



Students visited Starved Rock State Park and enjoyed all the bluffs and canyons while hiking!

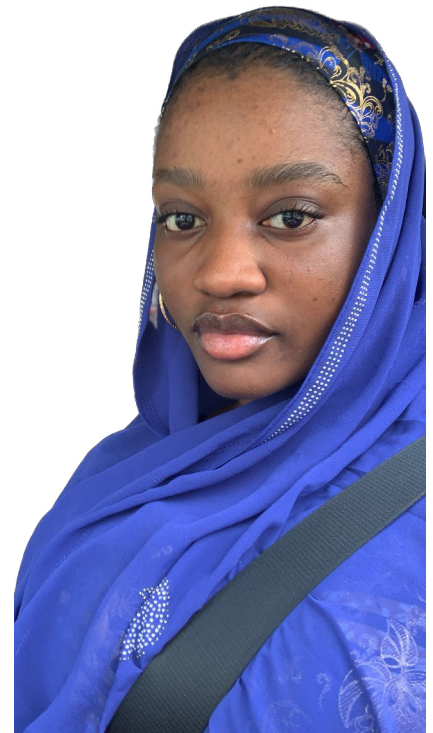


# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## MARIAM ABDULSALAM

My pronouns are she/her and hers. I am from Nigeria and can speak English and Yoruba. My major is Biology Pre-med. Nigeria is a fun country to be in but what I love the most about it is the culture. My favorite food from my home country is Amala and here in the US are chips and dip, specifically queso. I really enjoy reading books, talking to people and dancing. I don't have a favorite movie since I am not really a TV person. The hashtag that best describe me is #happygirl. My dream job is to be a Gynecologist. I chose UIS because of its

diverse environment and leadership opportunities. I am a member of the blue crew and ASA organizations at UIS and also now I am working as a student employee for the International Student Services Office. A tip I can give to new students is go out and get involved with your community, UIS is a fun environment to be a part of. After graduation, I am hoping to get into Med school, that is a journey I am really excited about and am looking forward to it.



## TRAVEL SIGNATURE

If you're planning to travel over Summer break, please check page 2 of your Form I-20. Remember, the travel signature for currently enrolled students is good for one year. If you need a new travel signature, you will need to submit the "Travel Signature Request E-Form" via iStart. Once we have verified that your SEVIS record is up-to-date, we will print or email you a new Form I-20 with a travel signature. We will then notify you and your form I-20 will be delivered to you via the method that you choose when you submit the e-form request. Your options will be to receive it in a pdf file transmitted electronically, to arrange an express mail shipment of the paper document, or to pick up the paper document in the ISS office.

Please remember to request a signature at least 2 weeks prior to your planned travel. Review travel information on the [ISS website](#) prior to departure and make sure that you travel with all required documents:

- Passport valid for at least 6 months into the future
- Valid US visa
- Form I-20 with travel endorsement less than 1 year prior to the date of return into the US
- You may wish to have copies of financial documentation and your student transcript as an additional precaution when traveling



## ALUYOR BROTHERS STORY

Godwin, Favour, and Emmanuel Aluyor are three brothers from Nigeria attending UIS together. Their majors are Master of Human Services, Master of Computer Sciences, and Master of Data Analytics, respectively. The eldest brother, Godwin, was the first one who decided to come to UIS. He states that an interview with Dr. Youngjin Kang, Assistant Professor of the Child and Family Studies Concentration of the department of Human Services, and the way she spoke about the program pulled him in and knew right away that UIS was where he wanted to go. He brought his wife and two kids as well. Then, he sold the idea to his brothers of coming to study here too. Favour and Emmanuel were encouraged to come to UIS

after finding out more about the programs of their interest and also because their older brother was already studying here, so they did not think twice. They do not regret their decision because they enjoy being able to have meaningful interactions with professors. All three had the full support of their parents and family. They do not live on campus but enjoy living in the States and specifically Springfield because it is a quiet city. They all agreed that the thing they miss the most about their home country is the food since nothing compares to the quality of their food at home. They also miss their friends and the warm weather because it does not snow in Nigeria. Their favorite experience living in this country so far has been that they could see their mother, who lives in Texas. Also, they like that here is safe

and they can go out at night, while in Nigeria that is uncommon. What they love most about UIS is the staff, they like how easy it is to talk with professors and how fast they get an email response from them. Godwin will graduate in December and has plans to pursue a PhD, while Favour and Emmanuel will graduate in May of next year and will gain employment experience in the country through OPT first. Advice they would give to someone who is new to UIS are explore, learn new things, gain experiences both in life and academically, be well rounded, try to experience everything, do not just stick with routine, and take advantages of the opportunities around you!





## ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH



May is Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in the US. The heritage month recognizes the contributions and influences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the history, culture, society, and achievements in the United States. Asian and Pacific Islander is a wide term that encompasses the entire Asian continent as well as the Pacific islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. The reason the month of May was selected to commemorate this heritage is based on the 2 historical events that occurred in May: 1) the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to the US in May 1843, and 2) the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869, which saw a large contribution from Chinese Immigrants. According to the 2020 Census, the population of Asian American and Pacific Islander is 20.6 million approx., making up about 6.2% of the nation's population. The Census Bureau indicates that 23 out of 59 different languages that originated in Asia are also spoken in the US, other than English. More information and activities about Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month can be found on the [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center](#) website.

These are some Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who contributes/contributed to the US:



**Ajay Bhatt**, Indian-American, computer architect: Developed USB technology to make connections of PCs and peripheral devices easier and flexible



**Etel Adnan**, Lebanese-American poet, essayist, and visual artist: A leading voice of contemporary Arab-American culture



**Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner**, Marshallese, writer, poet performer and climate change activist: Impact Hero Award winner



**Channapha Khamvongsa**, Lao-American, former founder of Legacies of War: Dedicated to raising awareness of 'secret war' in Laos



**Grace Lee Boggs**, American-born Chinese, author and social activist: Known for black power, feminism, and environmental movements



**Shirin Neshat**, Iranian-American visual artist: Explore the cultural issues that shape her native Iran, with particular emphasis on the experience of women



**Eric S Yuan**, Chinese-American, engineer, Zoom CEO: Created Zoom and saved our connections during the COVID pandemic



**Haunani-Kay Trask**, Native Hawaiian activist, scholar, and author: A leading figure of the Hawaiian Sovereignty movement



**Peter Tsai**, Taiwanese-American, material scientist: Developed N95 respirator and saved our life during the COVID pandemic

**INTERNATIONAL  
STUDENT SERVICES  
OFFICE**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**FIND US:**

UNIVERSITY OF  
ILLINOIS  
SPRINGFIELD— ONE  
UNIVERSITY  
PLAZA,  
HRB 10  
SPRINGFIELD, IL  
62703-5407

◇ INTERNATIONAL CONGRATULATORY  
CEREMONY: MAY 12, 2PM @  
STUDENT UNION BALLROOM

**CONTACT US:**

PHONE: 217-206-6678  
EMAIL: [ISS@UIS.EDU](mailto: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 2-4PM

