



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
SPRINGFIELD

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# International Student Services Newsletter

DECEMBER 2021

## *From the Directors' Desks*

Are you ready for a break? You deserve it! You successfully completed another semester of study amidst a global pandemic.

It will soon be two years since all of this started, and the end is still not in sight. There have been significant medical advances, and there will be more. UIS has done a tremendous job of keeping everyone safe, and we will continue to do so. But, to say that these two years have been extraordinary would be an understatement. Your heroic efforts to gain knowledge in your chosen field while not knowing what the next day might bring are truly praiseworthy. Congratulations on your successes to date. May they continue throughout your educational career and thereafter.

For some, this has been the final semester at UIS and OPT, a return home, or a new degree are just around the corner. For others reading this, there are only a few weeks remaining for you to arrive on campus and begin your studies. For still others, this month brings that well-deserved break and a chance to rest, relax, and prepare for the spring semester. We in ISS want to assist all of you in any way that we can. Get in touch right away.

You do need to be aware that we will be closing the office at the end of the work day on December 23 and will not be back until the start of the work day on January 3. Try to get everything done and all your questions asked either before we leave or plan to wait until we return. The campus police will have our personal phone

numbers if you have a true emergency, but don't create one for yourself by waiting to get done during that break what you could be getting done today.

Our new group of international students will be arriving on January 12 for orientation starting the morning of January 13. Watch our website and your email for additional details as the orientation day approaches. Be sure to make all your travel plans and housing arrangements far enough ahead of time.

For those of you celebrating special holidays this month with family and friends, we hope that you enjoy them and have a lot of fun.

Best wishes,

Rick Lane

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## ISA November Events

### Pumpkin Carving

Students met at UIS Community Garden to carve pumpkins and learn about the significance pumpkins have in the celebration of Halloween.



## International Education Week

Colleges and universities all across the US celebrate International Education Week! IEW is a joint initiative of the US Department of State and the US Department of Education "to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future leaders from abroad to study, learn, and exchange experiences." Several opportunities have been organized to help you to do that. Some events included: Sahaja Yoga hosted by Campus Recreation, Studying Away with UIS Exchange Partners hosted by Office of Engaged Learning, International Education in the Land of Lincoln, hosted by World Affairs Council of Central Illinois and OPT Workshop for Spring 2022 graduates hosted by ISS.

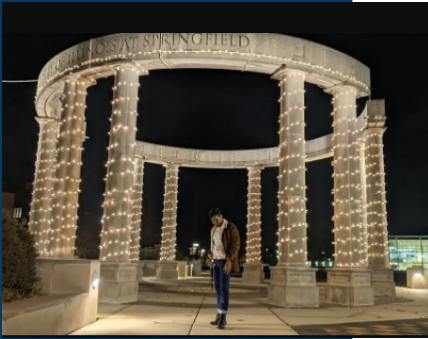
### World Geography

Students picked a piece of paper with a country on it and located the country on the map.



## International Student Spotlight:

## Sam Nunes



My pronouns are he/him. I speak 4 languages ( Marathi, English, Hindi , Vadvali) and understand 5 (Kadodi) and counting. I am from a town called Vasai which is a suburb of Mumbai, India. The beautiful coastlines of the Indian peninsula are not only enchanting but embedded by rich culture, history and story. Each town and city is different and has its own unique identity and its own voice. People from every city will tell you the city's own story and within different parts of the provinces, they will have their own unique cuisine style. Throughout your journey in India, you will surely find a wide range of flavors and traditional cuisine. In India, Vindaloo is my soul food which always reminds me of home. In the USA my favorite food is steak, roast beef and chili. A hashtag that best describes me is #PlantParent. I have a wide range of hobbies and interests. I have an affinity for art and museums. I love reading, learning new languages, hiking, cooking, gardening and am also an amateur astronomer. When thinking about traveling, I have quite a long list and on the top of the list will be visiting Malta, South Korea , Japan, Greece, Spain and Rural parts of Italy. I will also love to visit Sharm el-Sheikh gain sometimes. I am a dual masters student in public health (MPH) and public administration (MPA). My dream is to work for an international health organization like International vaccine institute (IVI) , GAVI organization or the WHO promoting vaccine research and advocacy to enhance global health in the next 10 years. The GPSI program, a small campus with amazing opportunities has been the major decision making factor for me choosing UIS. I like the Springfield downtown area. It is an amazing place to hangout with your friends, Springfield on its own has its own small community and helpful people, my experience till now has been very humbling and amazing. Currently I am working with the international students service as an international student ambassador and it's has been quite exciting to meet and interact

with all the international students community and to take a step ahead I recently joined the international students association to help establish a better and welcoming culture and climate for the international to interact with other students and settle to the new environment. I am also part of international student friendship (ISF) group who are like family to me. UIS has so many resources and organization that you can be part of it allows you to build connection, meet new people and make new friends. Their is so much to do you will never feel left out or alone. The campus always has some activities going, from TRAC activities to CSF group activities you are sure to find something to your interest .After UIS I can't wait to work and gain exposure on a global level by working in either the R & D sector or the epidemiology department for Global vaccine manufacturers. Tips I have to offer new students is, feel free to explore and interact with other domestic and international students, learn and use the different resources UIS have to offer, build connections, get to know your advisor, professors and colleagues, if you need help feel free to reach out to people.

## TASTE OF CULTURE: Christmas, December 25



One week after the International Festival, One of the most widely known December holidays, Christmas traditions vary around the

world. While Americans celebrate with Christmas trees, visits from Santa Claus, and dreams of snowy landscapes, Christmas falls during Australia's summer, where it is popular to go camping or to the beach over the holiday. Some Australians decorate a "Christmas Bush," a native Australian tree with small green leaves and flowers that turn red during the summer. In England, Christmas traditions are similar to those in the United States, but instead of leaving milk and cookies

for Santa Claus, children leave mince pies and brandy for Father Christmas. In Iceland, capital city Reykjavik turns into a winter wonderland with its Christmas market and for the children, there is not one but thirteen Santas, known as Yule Lads. One arrives each night in the thirteen days before Christmas, leaving small gifts in shoes left in window sills.

## TASTE OF CULTURE: Spider Web Trees



For many in the Ukraine, spider webs and spider-shaped ornaments are a classic tree decoration based on a tradition that came about in the late 1800s or early 1900s.

The spider web tradition is based on the Legend of the Christmas Spider. In the story, a widowed

mother and her children lived in poverty. One year, a pine cone fell into their house and took root. The family tended to it and nurtured it to grow so they would have a tree for Christmas. However, when Christmas came about, they had no money to spend on decorations. On Christmas Eve, the family went to bed disheartened about their bare tree. When they woke up, a wonderful thing had happened. Spiders came in the night and spun their webs all over the tree so, when the sun came up, the webs became gold and silver and the tree was beautiful. In many European countries including the Ukraine, Germany and Poland, spiders are considered a sign of good luck and, for

the family whose tree they decorated, their luck turned around and they never lived penniless again.

Since it was first shared, the story has turned into a century-long tradition of decorating trees with spider webs and spider ornaments. However, if you like the idea but want something less sticky to make your tree beautiful, the legend is also considered to be the inspiration behind tinsel!



## WORLD CELEBRATIONS : ŌMISOKA , December 31



On ōmisoka, people across Japan are expected to perform any activities necessary for them to start the new year afresh. Some activities include cleaning the house, settling debts, purifying the home from evil spirits and bad luck, and bathing. Once they're done, they can spend the remainder of the year relaxing. Typically an hour before the year ends, families and friends gather to share a meal of noodles called either toshikoshi soba or toshikoshi udon. Traditionally, the noodles represent the "crossing over from one year to the next." At midnight, many people take to the streets to visit a temple or shrine for the first time in the year. The custom is known as Hatsumōde. Once in the new year, families continue to celebrate modestly by eating a variety of pre-made meals known as osechi.

The tradition of ōmisoka is hundreds of years old and is celebrated to show reverence to the god of current and upcoming years. While many ancient customs related to the holiday are still practiced, other new practices are also emerging. One of the most popular right now is for groups of people to gather and watch a popular four-hour singing competition called the Red/White Singing Battle. And once the new year strikes? Remember to wish everyone akemashite omedetō, which means, "congratulations on the new year."



# Old Capital Holiday Walks from Nov 27 to Dec 22

## Wednesday & Saturday's

### Wednesday evenings, 4 – 8 pm

Visiting Santa Claus, 4 – 7 pm

Lawn of the Old State Capital

LRS Ice Skating Rink, 5 – 8 pm

Tickets online at [sangamonceo.com/ice-rink/](http://sangamonceo.com/ice-rink/)

Lawn of the Old State Capital

Free Performances, 4 pm & 6 pm

Old State Capital Plaza

Free carriage rides. 4 – 7 pm

Pickup on Washington St. between Fifth and Sixth St.

Kids craft-making and sock skating, 4 – 7 pm

Kidzeum, 412 E. Adams St., Admission fee is required.

Hoogland Teens Living Window of Disney's Frozen, 5 pm & 7 pm

Hoogland Center for the Arts

The Gingerbread Village, 4 – 7 pm

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Free admission

Late shopping hours until 7 pm

## Saturdays, 10 am – 7 pm

Visiting Santa Claus, 10 am – 1 pm, 1:30 – 4:30 pm, 5 – 7 pm

Lawn of the Old State Capital

LRS Ice Skating Rink, 11 am – 7 pm

Tickets online at [sangamonceo.com/ice-rink/](http://sangamonceo.com/ice-rink/)

Lawn of the Old State Capital

Free Performances, 11 am, 2 pm & 5 pm

Old State Capital Plaza

Free carriage rides. 2 – 7 pm

Pickup on Washington St. between Fifth and Sixth St.

Kids craft-making and sock skating, 9 am – 7 pm

Kidzeum, 412 E. Adams St., Admission fee is required.

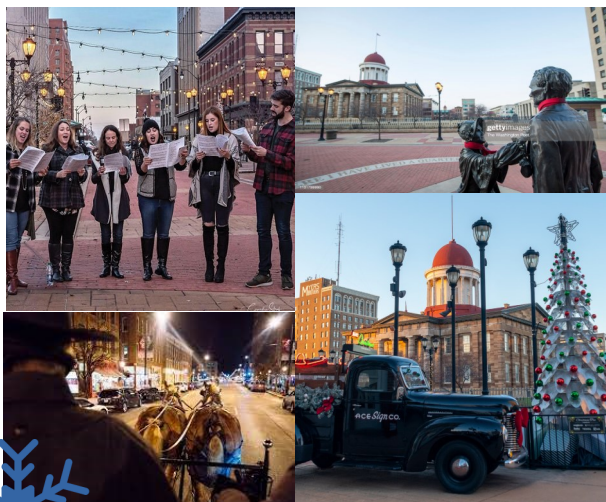
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Congratulations Men's Soccer Team!

First ever program win in the NCAA Tournament



### D2CCA MEN'S SOCCER ALL-REGION SELECTIONS

MARVIN ZOTT  
FIRST-TEAM



CONAL GALLAGHER  
SECOND-TEAM



Marvin Zott #25 From Bernburg, Germany. Plays as a midfielder and is a senior this year!

MSOC Dec 04 - 6:00 p.m. (5:00 p.m. central)	MSOC Dec 09 - TBA	MSOC Dec 11 - TBA
		
at NCAA Division II Men's Soccer Championship	vs NCAA Division II Men's Soccer Championship	vs NCAA Division II Men's Soccer Championship

Hours:

Monday—Friday

8:30am—5:00pm

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