



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

STAFF

Rick Lane (He / Him)
Director
Rachael Matingi (She / Her)
Immigration Specialist
Tracy Rakes (She / Her)
Immigration Specialist
Joel Short (He / Him)
Immigration Specialist
Jolene Vollmer (She / Her)
Immigration Specialist
Erika Suzuki (She / Her)
Program Coordinator
Geraldina Mulville (She / They)
Graduate Assistant
Lynise Gutierrez (She/Her)
Student Employee
Miles Lumpkins (He/Him)
Student Employee

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Student Spotlight 2

Taste of Culture &
WORLD CELEBRATIONS 3

Black History Month 4

Diversity Center:
Black History Month
Events 5-6

UPCOMING EVENTS &
Office contact info 7

International Student Services Newsletter

ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2022

From the Directors' Desks



How is everything going after the first two weeks of class? Reading over all those semester class assignments in the syllabi can be pretty overwhelming. Now is the time to map everything out and plan your semester well. Don't put off for another day what you can get done today. Use the Learning Hub. Make it a successful semester.

With the pandemic ongoing, our programming for this semester will be partially in person and partially virtual. Watch our website and Campus Announcements for regular updates. Participate in everything that you can. You will benefit from the interaction with your fellow students.

If you do find that social isolation and culture shock are getting to you, don't hesitate to contact the Counselling Center. Our professional counselling staff will work with you to get you out of the slump and back on course. Don't wait until things have gotten out of hand. Take charge of your mental health just like you do your

physical health. It is just as important, and the two strongly impact each other.

This may be a good time to re-visit the ISS website and review all the information and resources available for you there. We are very proud of our website and update it every week. Use it.

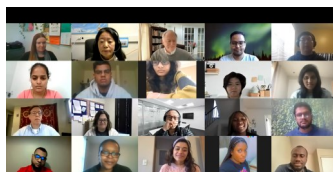
Enjoy the rest of our newsletter. If you find news that you think might be of interest to the rest of the international students, send it to our office. We are always looking for entertaining and educational stories to share.

Best,

Rick Lane

International Orientation

New international students attending online orientation



Welcome Party



Students played Icebreaker games such as Passions Tic Tac Toe, Kahoot quiz, Mafia (game), and musical chair. ISS's international ambassador Seiwa was interviewed by the local news.





International Student Spotlight:

Abhishek Soni

My pronouns are he/him/his. I speak the following languages: Nepali, Bhojpuri, English, Maithili, and Hindi. I am from the country of mountains and peace: Nepal. My country is small in size but immense in natural beauty. It is a country sandwiched between India and China in the South-East Asian region. Despite having people from multiple religions, casts, and creeds in our country, we are known for living with each other in complete harmony. Nepal is also widely renowned as the birthplace of Lord Gautam

Buddha who is regarded as "the light of Asia" and the "messenger of peace throughout the world." Nepal is also home to the eight of the highest mountains in the world including Mt. Everest which is the highest in the world. Nepal has diversity in population as well as in geographical topography. Despite being a small country, we have everything ranging from humid, plain lands to beautiful, arid stretches to luscious, emerald-green hills to snow-capped humongous mountains that touch the sky, and everything in between-- you name it, all just a few miles apart! The geographical beauty of Nepal and the beauty reflected from our diversity in castes and our individual food, dresses, and lifestyles overall identify us as proud Nepalese. To witness all the aforementioned escapes from a hustling life, thousands of tourists visit Nepal annually and find a special place in their hearts for what Nepal has to offer. To you reading this: I welcome you to my beautiful, beloved home nation! People from different ethnicities live in my country and they all have food unique to their cultures. Therefore, we have a wide variety of delicacies that people enjoy, and if I were to name my favorites, it would be a long list. For the sake of the question, I would love to nominate my favorite food to be "Momo". They are dumplings, unique and original to Nepal, with a bit of variety and upliftment of taste in every shop that sells it. Fun fact: "Momo" is loved and cherished and available in all parts of Nepal. I haven't eaten many foods here in the US, but I would say pizza has helped me a lot to provide me a tasty escape for many days. I love visiting new places and going on hikes. I am up for any adventure and hyped up if I am joining with my friends. I want to travel to Sweden, England, Japan, Australia, Switzerland, Germany, South Africa and many, many more. I love watching movies from the science-fiction genre and enjoy music of all kinds in my multitasking times. I love meeting new people

and making new friends. My favorite areas of study are human biology and computer science. Hashtags that best describe me is #Adventurous #International #MakeNewFriends.. I chose UIS for its small size, location in the capital city of Illinois, the scholarship it provided me, and the great teacher-student relations owing to the small campus size and small class size. Springfield is a beautiful city and has many fun places as well as opportunities around. There is always something for everybody. I am currently majoring in Biochemistry with a minor in Computer Science. I would like to work in a role that uses interdisciplinarity and combines research science with the use of computer informatics. Therefore, my ideal job would be something in industrial material development and such. I am a part of the International Student Association club at UIS and work at the International Student Services office as the International Student Ambassador. Both my involvements allow me to meet new international students, work closely with them and learn a lot about their cultures and countries. I am also a member of the Active-Minds@UIS club and advocate for sound mental health and happiness for everybody. I also work part-time at the Dean's Office of College of Liberal Arts and Science as the Front Desk Attendant where I get to brush up on my interpersonal, and communication skills. After graduating from UIS, I look forward to completing my graduate education in material research and then going back to my home country and working with research organizations there to help Nepal advance in the field of technological science. Some tips I have for new students are: It might be hard to find your place and position when you are a new (international) student at a small campus like UIS, but please hold on and give college life some time. You will love it eventually. Join student organizations and try getting a job on campus. It helps a lot in socializing, professional development, and creating a network of your own. There is always something fun happening on campus-get out of your comfort zone- join in! We are waiting for you!

TASTE OF CULTURE: Lunar New Year



It's called the Lunar New Year because it marks the first new moon of the lunisolar calendars traditional to many east Asian

countries including China and Vietnam, which are regulated by the cycles of the moon and sun. A solar year—the time it takes Earth to orbit the sun—lasts around 365 days, while a lunar year, or 12 full cycles of the Moon, is roughly 354 days. A month is still defined by the moon, but an extra month is added periodically to stay close to the solar year. This is why the new year falls on a different day within that month-long window each year. In China, the 15-day celebration kicks off on New Year's Eve with a family feast called a reunion dinner full of traditional Lunar New Year foods and culminates with the Lantern Festival. The Lunar New Year isn't only observed in

China, it's celebrated across several countries and other territories in Asia, including South Korea and Singapore. In Vietnam, Lunar New Year is known as Tết, and in Tibet it's Losar. In the U.S., though, it's most commonly associated with what's often called Chinese New Year, the American version of China's 15-day-long festivities. ([Resource](#))



World Celebrations: Rio Carnival



On Friday February 25th, Rio Carnival celebrations begin and continue till Saturday March 5th. Carnival (actually Carnaval in Portuguese) is a wild celebration of food, alcohol, music and fun. It's held annually for a few days before the start of Lent, the 40-day period of fasting, abstinence and repentance that's observed by the Roman Catholic Church before Easter. The word carnival comes from the Latin carne vale, or "farewell to the flesh" The Portuguese brought the practice of Carnival to Brazil around 1850, patterning it mainly on the Parisian tradition of holding masquerade parties and balls at this time of the year. However, the Brazilians morphed it into a version uniquely their own over time, adding in elements from the people's African and indigenous cultural backgrounds. Thus, Carnival in Brazil eventually incorporated lots of parades, elaborate costumes, music, dancing and balls. A tradition also developed where people dress up in op-

posing roles: men dress as women, aristocrats dress as commoners, the poor dress as the rich.

Carnival is held all over the country; celebrations differ a bit by region, but Rio de Janeiro's celebration is the most popular, drawing crowds of 500,000 foreigners annually from across the globe [source: Rio Carnival]. One of the highlights of Rio's Carnival is its elaborate parades, staged by major samba schools. The samba schools work year-round to prepare for their Carnival parade entry, and the immense Sambodromo (samba stadium) facility was built specifically to showcase the parades.

([Resource](#))



The United States Celebrates Black History Month

What is Black History Month?

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of blacks in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating black history. The story of Black History Month begins in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by black Americans and other peoples of African descent. Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926, choosing the second week of February to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The event inspired schools and communities nationwide to organize local celebrations, establish history clubs, and host performances and lectures.

[\(Resource\)](#)

Black History Month 2022 Theme

Since 1976, every American president has designated February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme.

The Black History Month 2022 theme, "Black Health and Wellness," explores "the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birthworkers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well."



Celebrating Change & Achievement

Deqa Dhalac



Dhalac is the first Somali American mayor in the United States, according to New American Leaders, an organization that trains and encourages immigrants to run for office. The organization says they hope she won't be the last. Dhalac's election is also a historic first for South Portland, which has never had a Black mayor before, says Seth Goldstein, vice president of the South Portland Historical Society. Dhalac fled Somalia in 1990, just before the country descended into civil war. After she immigrated to the United States in 1992, she says it wasn't long before she started organizing fellow immigrants to become citizens and vote. But she'd never thought of running for office herself, until she came to a troubling realization. "No matter how important my work was, we were missing out at the decision-making tables," Dhalac said at her inaugural address. After former US President Donald Trump took office, Dhalac told CNN she felt even more determined to make her voice heard. She joined protesters at a 2016 rally after Trump made comments denigrating Somali immigrants. The next year, she participated in a protest against White supremacy and drew cheers from the crowd when she declared, "I am a Muslim, Black immigrant woman, and I'm not going anywhere." When an opening came up on the South Portland City Council, Dhalac says many people were pushing her to run. Once she got her family's blessing, she started knocking on doors, doing what she could to connect with voters and win them over. In 2018, she ran against a local business owner and won, making history as the first African American and first Muslim elected to the council. In 2020, she ran unopposed for a second term. The city council selects from among its members who will be mayor, and in November, her colleagues unanimously supported her nomination. Dhalac's major priorities for the city include improving its climate change response, increasing the availability of affordable housing and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. Being on South Portland's City Council isn't a full-time job. Dhalac has a background in social work, and by day she's the family engagement and cultural responsiveness specialist for Maine's Department of Education. She also serves on numerous boards and is the mother of three adult children.

[\(Resource\)](#)

Diversity Center Celebrates Black History Month

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST

Opening Event/ Candlelight Vigil (Student Union Ballroom 12:00 pm)

This is the very first event for BHM that the Diversity Center uses to open Black History Month and begin the month-long celebration of African American culture. There will be performances and shared experiences amongst our very own campus community.

Step Afrika (Student Union Ballroom 7:00 pm)

Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities; traditional African dances; and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience. Performances are much more than dance shows; they integrate songs, storytelling, humor, and audience participation. The blend of technique, agility, and pure energy makes each performance unique and leaves the audience with their hearts pounding.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2ND

Eyes on the Prize (Diversity Center Lounge 5:00 pm)

We will watch the two episodes from the Civil Rights Eyes on the Prize mini-movie series and engage in meaningful conversation. A small meal will be provided.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD

BHM Trivia Hosted by Alpha Phi Alpha (Diversity Center 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

BHM Trivia will be a fun and engaging way to refresh your knowledge of Black History. There will be several trivia games played with a Kahoot game at the end. Prizes will be awarded to the winners of each game.

Dance in Black hosted by Siobhan (Virtual)

The purpose of Dance in Black is to highlight prominent and note-worthy Black figures that have trailblazed the avenue for Black dancers. The goal is to highlight various genres of dance each week (ballet, tap, jazz, liturgical) leading up to the in-person event where we will discuss the figures that have been highlighted while simultaneously practicing technique and choreography.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH

Feminist Friday hosted by the Women's Center (Diversity Center Lounge 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm)

Join the Women's Center as we have an impactful conversation about the medical disparities and health inequalities that women of color face.

Pink Goes Red hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. (SLB Gym 4:00 pm - 6:30pm)

Overview/Mission/Goal: Join the ladies of the Tau Chi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. for a fun double Dutch competition as well as many more games. We will be playing dodgeball, hosting pacer tests, and running a bouncy house maze. Throughout the event, we will be checking heart rates in support of Heart Disease Awareness.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH

One of the Most Important Social Justice Activists of the 20th Century You've Probably Never Heard Of hosted by Gender & Sexuality Student Services

To introduce students to the life and contributions of Pauli Murray, a twentieth-century human rights activist, legal scholar, feminist, poet, Episcopal priest, labor organizer, and multiracial Black, LGBTQ+ community member of transmasculine experience, who famously coined the phrase, "Jane Crow" and addressed intersectionality and the oppression of black women.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH

Addressing Sexual Health Inequities in the Black Community hosted by Gender & Sexuality Student Services (3:00 pm - 5:00 pm)

The mission of this event is to increase awareness of the structural and societal inequities that lead to sexual health disparities in the black community. During this event, we would discuss the systemic racism, homophobia, and sexism that have led to the mistreatment of the black community in health care, stigmatization and shaming of sexuality, and restricted access to sexual health services and resources. Some specific topics discussed are the Tuskegee Experiment, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, equitable and accessible resources, and empowerment for reclaiming your individual sexuality and sexual health.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH

Poetry Night with Guest Poet Akeem Olaj hosted by Student Activities Committee (Student Union Grill 6:00 pm)

Poetry night will allow for students to come up and share their own poetry while having guest poet Akeem Olaj there to share some of his personal poems and spoken word pieces with the community.

This will be a time for UIS to gather as a community to enjoy a night of poetry.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH

Titans in Rock: Musicians throughout the Ages hosted by Gamma Phi Omega International Sorority Inc. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. (Student Union North Ballroom 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

Titans in Rock we'll be in event that discusses the evolution of rock, from its roots in music to its expansion into different demographics. Join us in admiring different artists such as Jimi Hendrix and chuckie Berry. To close this event we will host a kahoot competition for a chance to win and assortment of prizes.

Dance in Black hosted by Siobhan (Virtual)

The purpose of Dance in Black is to highlight prominent and note-worthy Black figures that have trailblazed the avenue for Black dancers. The goal is to highlight various genres of dance each week (ballet, tap, jazz, liturgical) leading up to the in-person event where we will discuss the figures that have been highlighted while simultaneously practicing technique and choreography.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH

High School to College Mixer hosted by Diversity Center (Student Union Ballroom 10:00 am - 2:00pm)

This would be an engaging time for current UIS students to interact with local high school students as they come to UIS to hear from different departments, see a variety of performances and engage with various student organizations on campus.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH

Afro Ritmo hosted by Baile Monarcas and Afro Beats Dance Crew (Student Union South Ballroom 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm)

This event would teach UIS the history and cultures of African and Afro-Latin Dances through performances and participant interaction.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH

BMCS Induction Ceremony hosted by Black Male Collegiate Society (Student Union Ballroom 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm)

Recognizing gentlemen who have worked hard on the campus's community to be inducted into the Black Male Collegiate Society.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH

Bring on the Heat hosted by Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity, Inc., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. & Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. (Student Union North Ballroom 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm)

The event aims to provide a social environment for sneakerheads to show off their best sneakers/ basketball shoes. At the same time, the event will quickly educate participants about the origins of sneaker culture and how it became popular through a Kahoot game

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

Eyes on the Prize (Diversity Center Lounge 3:00 pm)

We will watch the two episodes from the Civil Rights Eyes on the Prize mini-movie series and engage in meaningful conversation. A small meal will be provided.

Policing the Criminal Justice System guest speaker Joanna Johnson hosted by the Diversity Center (Diversity Center Lounge 6:00 pm)

The mission of this event is to start a positive conversation between the people of color at UIS and campus/local police officers. Conversations like these are important as important questions get asked and opinions get heard from both sides. Our guest speaker Joanna Johnson will be giving her perspective as a black female police officer, and we plan to have our UIS police there to also answer questions.

Diversity Center Celebrates Black History Month

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

Dance in Black hosted by Siobhan (Virtual)

The purpose of Dance in Black is to highlight prominent and note-worthy Black figures that have trailblazed the avenue for Black dancers. The goal is to highlight various genres of dance each week (ballet, tap, jazz, liturgical) leading up to the in-person event where we will discuss the figures that have been highlighted while simultaneously practicing technique and choreography.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

MLK Volunteer/Service Event (TBA)

More details about how to get involved to come.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

Eyes on the Prize (Diversity Center Lounge 3:00 pm)

We will watch the two episodes from the Civil Rights Eyes on the Prize mini-movie series and engage in meaningful conversation. A small meal will be provided.

PHam Phashion Show hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. (Student Union Ballroom)

Come join the Phirst Pham for a fun and fashionable night of walking the runway in different eras of black history. Students and local community members who have a passion for fashion will also be able to showcase their clothing lines and brands during the show. The event will conclude with music, dancing, and mingling with some of the brands represented in the show.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND

Black LGBT Leaders Tabling (Student Union Entrance 11:00 am)

To create Trading Cards featuring an image of the individual on the front and their achievements/ contributions/ effort ... etc. on the back. Giving the students the chance to match the image with their contributions, if they match more than 2, the name will be entered into the raffle to win a prize. Provide campus with active participation in learning about important black LBGTQ icons while playing a fun matching game.

UI Collaboration Event (Michelle Goodwin) (Virtual 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm)

U of I Collaboration Event: With Michele Goodwin (Webinar/Zoom) hosted by The Diversity Center (UIS), The Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center (UIUC), and the African American Cultural Center (UIC). 4-6pm.

Michele Bratcher Goodwin is a Chancellor's Professor at the University of California, Irvine and founding director of the Center for Biotechnology and Global Health Policy. She is credited with helping to establish and shape the health law field. Professor Goodwin is an internationally recognized voice on women's rights, reproductive health, healthy policy, and constitutional law and lectures worldwide on matters relating to the exploitation of women and girls. A prolific author, her most recent book Policing the Womb: Invisible Women and the Criminalization of Motherhood sheds light on the rising state regulation of pregnancy and criminalization of women.

30-min virtual Q&A with student leaders and other key campus stakeholders at 4pm CST

60-min virtual system-wide talk at 5pm CST

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD

Soul Food Dinner hosted by Black Student Union (Student Union Ballroom 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm)

Come Join Black Student Union as we come together to celebrate Black History Month by having games, laughter, and taking home some soul food home.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

Dance in Black hosted by Siobhan (Online and TRAC MPR 7:00 pm - 11:00 pm)

The purpose of Dance in Black is to highlight prominent and note-worthy Black figures that have trailblazed the avenue for Black dancers. The goal is to highlight various genres of dance each week (ballet, tap, jazz, liturgical) leading up to the in-person event where we will discuss the figures that have been highlighted while simultaneously practicing technique and choreography.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH

Feminist Friday: Black Maternal Health hosted by the Women's Center and Project Innocence Not Lost (Women's Center Lounge)

Gather in the Women's Center as we have an impactful conversation about raising awareness of problems rooted in the child welfare system and its effects on Black Children and families.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH

Ebony Ball hosted by Black Student Union (Student Union Ballroom 7:00pm - 10 pm)

Join the BSU as we congratulate Black students at UIS who have impacted the campus. The night will consist of performances from our dances teams, song selections from several UIS singers, dancing, food, and so much more.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

Gospel Karaoke hosted by Voices in Praise Gospel Choir (Student Union Ballroom 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

Join us as we have a spiritual day filled with prayer, gospel karaoke song selections, and praise dance performances.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH

Closing Ceremony hosted by Diversity Center (Diversity Center Lounge 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm)

Join us as we look to end Black History Month. We will reflect on the month and look toward the future and continue to make the month both meaningful and fun for our campus community.

THROUGHOUT THE MONTH

Black History Resources hosted by Brookens Library

A resource guide for black history resources and items from the collection available at Brookens Library. Enhance awareness of Brookens library resources and promote black history month. Also looking into the possibility of allowing community members to submit suggestions for the collection.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lunar New Year 2022:

Tuesday, February 1st, 1 pm @ Student Leadership Center

Join Us!

LUNAR NEW YEAR 2022

Tuesday, February 1
1 PM
Student Leadership Center

Office of International Student Services




H1B Workshop

Zoom
Friday, February 18
2 pm - 3 pm

Join us for an informational session with a practicing immigration attorney and learn about the process of applying for an H1-B visa.
Contact iss@uis.edu if you have any questions.

Hours:

Monday—Friday

8:30am—5:00pm

Office of International

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](#)

