



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD

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International Student Services Newsletter

ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2022

From the Directors' Desks

First of all, a big "Welcome to UIS" to all our new international students. We are very glad that you were able to get here, in spite of the many obstacles that you had to overcome in order to do so. We look forward to getting to know you better over the coming weeks and months. Be sure to attend our welcome party on January 21st, between 5-7pm at the Student Union Center Ballroom. Watch for other special events designed to help you get to know us, UIS, Springfield, Illinois, and the United States this semester. Keep an eye on this page of our website for updates.

And for all our international students, we want to remind you that we post updates regarding anything new related to the ever-changing immigration regulation scene here. While we will also send out email

messages about anything urgent (so be sure to read those), you can access this page to review the most recent government actions that might impact you.

January can be quite cold in central Illinois. Whenever you go out, make sure that you have a good heavy coat, gloves, warm shoes, and a hat. For those of you newly arrived from much warmer parts of the world, you need to understand that the wind chill can cause serious damage in a matter of minutes. Take care.

January can also be quite beautiful, especially when the snow fall covers everything. Enjoy the scenery that may be new to you. Enjoy, too, what could be your first snowball "fight" or building your first snow

person. If you get a chance, do some skiing or some ice skating.

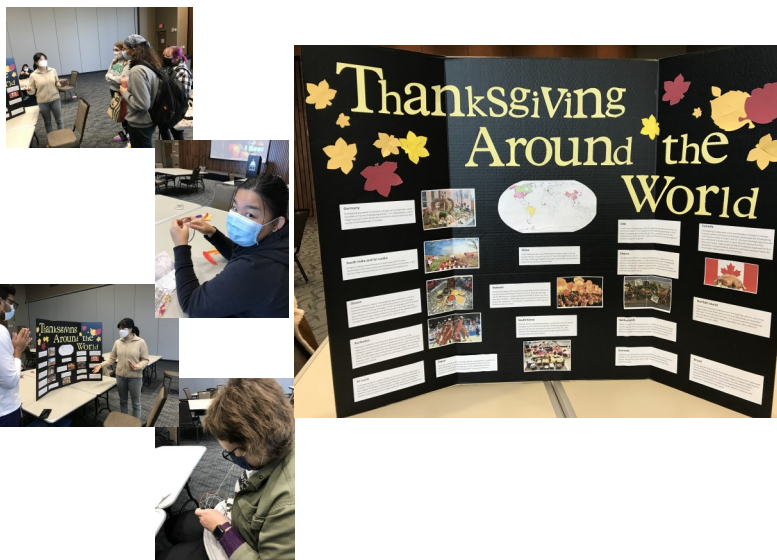
Most of all, take advantage of the cold weather to get ahead on your course work. Spring will be coming soon, and you will want to spend more time outside. Plan now to have that time available.

Again, welcome. Enjoy your time at UIS.

Rick Lane

ISA December Events

Thanksgiving Around the World



Students learned about the history of Thanksgiving in the US and other countries celebrate Thanksgiving.

International Student Spotlight:

Marvin Zott



My pronouns are he/him. I speak German, recently English and hopefully Spanish in the future. My hometown is Bernburg in Germany.. Germany is a beautiful country from the mountains in the south to the Baltic Sea in the north. My home country is rich in historic/modern culture and the people are striving for "German" perfection in everything they do.

My favorite food in Germany is "Maultaschen" because I really want them right now. In the United States there is nothing better than Waffle house coffee and toast after a rough night. A hashtag that best describes me is #Peaking. My main hobbies are ball sports and gaming. However, on campus I'm known as a movie/show critic for friends and as a specialist in Frisbee golf. There is a throwing technique named after me: "Zott's rolling nightmare". I would like to visit Colombia and Japan in the near future. Colombia has breathtaking landscapes and Japan an interesting culture.

My major is Master of Business Administration. My dream job would be in the management of a European Soccer club. Honestly, I ended up more random at UIS because of the pandemic circumstances in the last 2 years but at the end the GPSI program for graduate students and the ambitions of the soccer team signed me up. Springfield is the perfect mix of small town feeling and large city highlife if needed. During my time at UIS, I was part of the UIS Men's Soccer team. I

was titled a third-team defender on the 2021 D2CCA NCAA Division II Men's Soccer All-American list. After UIS, I will move back in with my parents and be without a job. Reasons enough to quickly find a nice apartment and a great job in a German city or pursue another adventure in a different country. Next to that I will try to continue playing soccer and hopefully learn how to play the drums. Some tips I have for future students are: 1. I would never be too late at the Union for Chicken Marsala. 2. It is critical to understand Quizlet and the quick search function. 3. Enjoy your time at UIS and find friends for life from all around the world.



TASTE OF CULTURE: Harbin Ice Festival

January 5, 2022



Every winter, millions of tourists flock to Harbin — a city in the northeast corner of China—to stand in temperatures nearing -40 degrees Fahrenheit and look at giant blocks of ice. Of course, it helps when those ice blocks are skillfully arranged to create a replica of the Colosseum, lit from the inside by multi-colored incandescent lights to glow under the inky winter sky.

January 5 marked the beginning of the two-month-long 35th annual Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival, the largest snow and ice festival in the world. Spanning eight million square feet of the city, the multi-million dollar production features massive snow and ice sculptures that draw visitors from across the globe. Though the official modern-day festival began in 1985, an organized ice show began in 1963, and the event can trace its frigid artistry back to the early Qing dynasty when peasants and fishermen placed candles inside blocks of ice cut from the Songhua River to create makeshift lanterns.

The 2022 Harbin Ice Festival is officially called the 38th Harbin International Ice and Snow

Sculpture Festival. The opening ceremony of the Harbin Ice Festival 2022 will take place on January 5, 2022. The theme parks and main events of the festival will include the 23rd Harbin Ice and Snow World, the 34th Harbin Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Expo, the 59th Ice Lantern Fair at Zhaolin Park, the 2nd Ice Lantern Show at Rongchuang Amusement Park, the 4th Harbin Songhua River Ice and Snow Carnival, the 3rd Ice Collecting Festival on the frozen Songhua River, and the 19th Yabuli Skiing Festival in Yabuli Town.

More than 400 activities and events will be held in Harbin city for celebrating the 38th Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival in 2022. The activities and events are based on ice and snow tourism, ice and snow culture, ice and snow fashion culture, ice and snow trade, and ice and snow sports. One event is the polar plunge. In a pool next to the Songhua, a polar plunge is held every day. Polar swimming is popular in China's northeast and is said to improve circulation and mental acuity. This plunge is only for the bravest or most masochistic health nuts, as the air temperatures rarely break sub-zero.

TASTE OF CULTURE: Martin Luther King Jr. Day



January 17, 2022

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is celebrated on the third Monday in January. Martin Luther King Day is a national holiday that honors the United States' most famous civil-rights activist.

The Rev. Dr. King's peaceful struggle against racial discrimination came to

national attention in 1955, when he led a boycott protesting laws that required blacks and whites to sit in separate sections on buses. He was jailed and physically attacked, and his home was bombed, but in 1956 the Supreme Court declared such laws unconstitutional.

In 1963, King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech before a quarter million people during the peaceful March on Washington, D.C. The next year he became the youngest man, at 35, to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. He continued fighting for civil rights and against

poverty until an assassin's bullet ended his life on April 4, 1968.

We commemorate Dr. King's inspiring words because his voice and his vision filled a great void in our nation, and answered our collective longing to become a country that truly lived by its noblest principles. Yet, Dr. King commemorate on this holiday the man of action, who put his life on the line for freedom and justice every day, the man who braved threats and jail and beatings and who ultimately paid the highest price to make democracy a reality of all Americans

World Celebrations: New Years Traditions



Spain: Eating Grapes

In Spain, locals will eat exactly 12 grapes at the stroke of midnight to honor a tradition that started in the late 19th century. Back in the 1800s, vine growers in the Alicante area came up with this tradition as a means of selling more grapes toward the end of the year, but the sweet celebration quickly caught on. Today, Spaniards enjoy eating one grape for each of the first 12 bell strikes after midnight in the hopes that this will bring about a year of good fortune and prosperity.



The Netherlands: Oliebollen

Ancient Germanic tribes would eat these pieces of deep-fried dough during the Yule so that when Germanic goddess Perchta, better known as Perchta the Belly Slitter, tried to cut their stomachs open and fill them with trash (a punishment for those who hadn't sufficiently partaken in yuletide cheer), the fat from the dough would cause her sword to slide right off. Today, oliebollen are enjoyed on New Year's Eve, and you'd be hard-pressed to find a Dutch food vendor in the winter months who isn't selling these doughnut-like balls.



Russia: Planting Underwater Trees

For the past 25 years or so, it has been a Russian holiday tradition for two divers, aptly named Father Frost and the Ice Maiden, to venture into a frozen Lake Baikal, the world's largest freshwater lake, and take a New Year Tree—typically a decorated spruce—more than 100 feet below the surface. Though the temperature is normally well below freezing in Russia on New Year's Eve, people travel from all over the world to partake in this frozen fête.



Greece: Hanging Onions

Greeks believe that onions are a symbol of rebirth, and so they hang the pungent vegetable on their doors in order to promote growth throughout the new year. Greek culture has long associated this food with the idea of development, seeing as all the odorous onion ever seemingly wants is to plant its roots and keep growing.



Japan: Soba Noodles

In Japanese culture, it is customary to welcome the new year with a bowl of soba noodles in a ritual known as toshikoshi soba, or year-crossing noodles. Though nobody is entirely sure where toshikoshi soba first came from, it is believed that the soba's thin shape and long length is meant to signify a long and healthy life. Many folks also believe that because the buckwheat plant used to make soba noodles is so resilient, people eat the pasta on New Year's Eve to signify their strength.



Ecuador: Burning Scarecrows

In Ecuador, New's Year Eve festivities are lit up (quite literally) by bonfires. At the center of each of these bonfires are effigies, most often representing politicians, pop culture icons, and other figures from the year prior. These burnings of the "año viejo," or "old year," as they're called, are held at the end of every year to cleanse the world of all the bad from the past 12 months and make room for the good to come.



Czech Republic: Cutting Apples

The Czech prefer to predict their future fortunes on New Year's Eve with the assistance of an apple. The night before the new year begins, the fruit is cut in half, and the shape of the apple's core is said to determine the fate of everyone surrounding it. If the apple's core resembles a star, then everyone will soon meet again in happiness and health—but if it looks like a cross, then someone at the New Year's Eve party should expect to fall ill.



Armenia: Baking "Good Luck" Bread

When people in Armenia bake bread on New Year's Eve, they add a special ingredient into their dough: luck. Of course, they don't literally add an ingredient called luck into their batter, but it is tradition for metaphorical good wishes to be kneaded into every batch of bread baked on the last day of the year.



Turkey: Sprinkling Salt

In Turkey, it's considered good luck to sprinkle salt on your doorstep as soon as the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Day. Like many other New Year's Eve traditions around the globe, this one is said to promote both peace and prosperity throughout the new year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

New International Student Welcome Party

Friday, January 21st, 5-7pm

@ Student Union Center Ballroom

OPT Workshops Coming up!



OPT WORKSHOP
Spring 2022 Graduates

Via Zoom
Friday, February 4
2 pm - 4 pm (CDT)

This workshop will cover Optional Practical Training (OPT) eligibility and the application process. All students graduating Spring 2022 that plan to apply for OPT must attend! It is mandatory to attend the workshop in order to apply for OPT. Contact ISS@uis.edu if you have any questions.



OPT WORKSHOP
Summer 2022 Graduates

Via Zoom
Friday, March 25
2 pm - 4 pm (CDT)

This workshop will cover Optional Practical Training (OPT) eligibility and the application process. All students graduating Summer 2022 that plan to apply for OPT must attend! It is mandatory to attend the workshop in order to apply for OPT. Contact ISS@uis.edu if you have any questions.

Hours:

Monday—Friday

8:30am—5:00pm

Office of International

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