

## Welcome to our Fall 2014 issue!



Stephanie Davis Goad  
Executive Director

Greetings to our students, staff and partners! It is hard to believe a year has gone by since our first newsletter last December. The past year has been one of accomplishments, as we have worked hard to shape International Programs into what it needs to be in order to serve as a beacon of diversity, cultural awareness and global understanding for our campus and the community.

It's also been a year of "firsts." The international students participated in the 9-11 Day of Service for the first time, and the first Indian Student Association at NSU was

established by our students from India. The World Fair was a wonderful opportunity for the international students to represent their countries and share their cultures. For the second year in a row, the International Student Organization won First Place among the Walking Group category in the Homecoming Parade. Our Study Abroad Fair showcased our study abroad programs to many students who stopped by. It is great to see the global movement taking effect at NSU, and it is exciting to see the students stepping up and creating their own ways to share their culture. We're proud to be a part of it. Check out the rest of this issue for a look at all that's been happening in International Programs. Don't forget to ask how you can go abroad. The world awaits!

## NSU blind student sees Spain through eyes of peers

Russell Rowland often reflects upon his recent trip to Spain with his Spanish class.

From touring a colossal cathedral in Cordoba to sampling the many different cuisines and tapas in Madrid, he regards it as one of the best experiences in his life.

"Two things I tried that interested me the most were octopus and squid. And I loved their potato dish,

'Potatas Bravas.' The best part was the food." The sounds, the smells, the tastes ... Rowland relished it all. He saw Spain much differently than other students on the trip. You see, Rowland is blind. Unlike his peers, he had to rely on his senses and the guid-



ance and descriptions of others to take in the full beauty of Spain. "There was

an open-air market where I went walking and feeling stuff. They had some carriages, and I liked walking over to them," he recalls.

"One of the guides took me up to touch a horse that was 16 hands high." Rowland said it was a successful trip, and it wasn't as much of a challenge as he thought it would be. "I didn't really have to (Rowland story cont. on pg. 6)

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International Trivia:

Which country has the oldest monarchy in the world?

(Answer on page 2)

Which country used the windmill first?

(Answer on page 3)

Did you know ...?

Vatican City is the smallest nation in the world?

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**International Trivia**  
**Answer: Japan**

## International Matters

### Office of International Programs brings the circus to NSU

Homecoming is a special time of year at NSU. Alumni come back



to campus for the first time in years, students partici-

pate in multiple campus-wide events, and for many of the international students, it is their first encounter with this American tradition. There were at least 30 international students and scholars who participated in the Homecoming Parade, as well as 50 who participated at the tailgate before the

football game. “I think it is unique for a university to have international students in its homecoming parade and it is a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness of the international community here at NSU,” said Yen Dang, Office of International Programs Student Advisor.

“People always love the food that our students prepare at the tailgate, and it is a great way to bring a little bit of their culture to the local community.”

The Office of International Programs won first place in the Office Decorating Contest this year.



“...IT IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HERE AT NSU.”

— YEN DANG, OIP STUDENT ADVISOR

### NSU International students celebrate Diwali Festival of Lights

Diwali is India's biggest and most important holiday of the year. It is celebrated in India and all over the world with joy and enthusiasm. The lighting of clay lamps, called Diyas, is a way of honoring God for the recent harvest and attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace, valor and fame.

Diwali symbolizes the age-old culture of India which teaches to vanquish ignorance that subdues humanity and to drive away the darkness that subdues the light of knowledge.

This year more than one hundred NSU students, both international and American came to the Second

Century Square to celebrate this Indian holiday with lights, food and fireworks. This was the first year that the Diwali Festival was celebrated on NSU’s campus. This was also the Indian Student Association’s first event on campus. This organization was assembled earlier this semester and quickly began making plans for other events and ways to share their culture.



## Fusion of cultures wows campus community at NSU's annual World Fair

The NSU Activities Board (NAB) hosted its 5th annual World Fair in September. All cultural groups on campus were invited to setup a booth at the fair to showcase the traditional aspects of their culture and native cuisine. NAB worked ahead with the students to purchase the ingredients needed, and the students prepared the food themselves for the attendees to sample.

This year we there were eight cultures represented:



Saudi Arabian, Indian, Hmong, Chinese, Nigerian, Mexican, Belgium, and Native American. Each group displayed items representing the traditional aspects of their cultures including saris from India, stick ball from the Native Americans, as well as kabisa from Saudi Arabia. Throughout the event, each group was given the opportunity to play traditional and cultural music of their



choice; this led to spontaneous dance lessons and overall entertainment for everyone.

Every year one of the favorite aspects of this event is the traditional style cuisine that is prepared by the students. "This is my favorite event every year and it has been my favorite event since we started it in 2010," said Sarah Johnson, director of the NAB. "It is a wonderful opportunity for all of the diverse cultures located here at NSU to showcase their cultures and educate the local community on the traditions of those cultures."



**"THIS IS MY FAVORITE EVENT EVERY YEAR AND IT HAS BEEN MY FAVORITE EVENT SINCE WE STARTED IT IN 2010."**  
—SARAH JOHNSON, DIRECTOR, NAB

## Study Abroad Fair makes second appearance at NSU

NSU's second Study Abroad Fair in mid October showcased its many study abroad opportunities. Students received information about how to study abroad and more specifically what opportunities NSU offers to its students to study abroad.

"This is such a great opportunity for students," said Tricia Price, Office of International Programs Study Abroad Coordinator. "It's a one-stop shop for those students who want to learn how to study abroad and what companies NSU works with in order to get students abroad."



This year there were more than 150 students who came to the Fair. "We had 11 vendors set up booths, and we provided food and drinks for the students that came by as well," stated Price. "We also gave out door prizes with all kinds of NSU gear. I think the students were just as excited about the door prizes as they were about the idea of studying abroad."

The number of NSU students studying abroad has more than tripled over the past few years. Price attributes the growth to the expanding number of programs added by the Office of International Programs.

**International Trivia  
Answer: Iran**



## International Matters

### Note from ESL Director: Confucius classrooms honored



**Marla Stubblefield**  
Director, Language  
and Cultural Center

Hello and Happy New Year from the Language and Cultural Center. We have had quite a busy year in 2014. Our Intensive English Language Program is growing each session and our students are working very hard to acquire the English Lan-

guage. Many of our students have passed their TOEFL and IELTS and have now moved on to their degree programs with NSU. We are very proud of them and congratulate them on their achievements! We were honored in September during the Moon Festival celebration for our support

and contributions to the Confucius Institute. Ambassadors from China visited us and sent their thanks and support for our Confucius Classrooms on both the Tahlequah and Broken Arrow campuses. The Broken Arrow campus hosted the event and we enjoyed music, martial arts and dance performances from some of the most recognized students in China. I was very privileged to travel to China this year for the Education Expo in Beijing. This conference was one of the largest recruitment and education expos in the world and opened many doorways of potential for students in both the ESL and degree programs at NSU. Please visit our webpage for information regarding Intensive English Language courses and information on the Confucius Classroom events and course offerings.

[academics.nsuok.edu/lcc](http://academics.nsuok.edu/lcc)

### Is someone you know interested in NSU?

We are looking for good students!! Please tell your family and friends about NSU. We would love to meet them. The best compliment we could receive is a referral of a friend or family member. If they have questions on how to apply, please have them visit the link below or call

Jami Wright at (918)444-2052.

<http://offices.nsuok.edu/international/>

### International RiverHawks hold sale of home-baked goods

This year The NSU International RiverHawks Club decided to start the school year off with a bake sale to help raise the money for some of the fall semester events. As a young organization, established only a little over a year ago, the bake sale was only the second bake sale in the club's history; and a great opportunity to raise money and international awareness for us on campus.

Many lunch-goers in the University Center were delighted to contribute to the organization by buying some and unique baked goods, several of



which were made from recipes from a the students' home countries. The students sold nearly \$200 in baked goods this year, compared to \$125 last year.

They would like to thank those who supported them and all of the international students who baked the items. They expressed a special thank you to the staff of the International Office for their support.

"Student support is critical," says Stephanie Davis Goad, Director of International

Programs. "We love to support the students in their endeavors, especially since they are taking ownership and investing in the social aspect of their life here at NSU."

## Morrow and Salmon pack for Swansea

Joy Morrow and Erika Salmon, 2015 Brad Henry International Scholarship recipients, are currently packing their bags to study abroad in Swansea, Wales. They will leave the U.S. January 14, and return in June to resume their studies at NSU. Learn more about the Brad Henry International Scholarship. Applications for the Spring 2016 semester will be available in February 2015.



## **International students float Illinois River and visit Castle**

Although August was scorching hot, international students discovered a new way to beat the heat. For the first time, the Office of International Programs provided "Fun Under the Sun," a unique experience to help NSU international students and scholars take in the natural beauty of the northeastern Oklahoma landscape by floating the Illinois River. There were about 30 international students and scholars who participated in the recreational opportunity, along with the staff of International Programs. Xuan Li, Program Coordinator of the Language & Culture Center, said, "This is a really unique

and fun way for our international folks to experience the Illinois River, embark on a leisurely ride on the cool water and



take in all the river has to offer."

In late October the group made a trip to the Castle of Muskogee, a popular Halloween attraction. The trip is a new tradition, which began last Fall. NSU's Office of

International Programs teamed up with the Language and Cultural Center to take international students and scholars along to

see the "spooky" side of American culture. Plans are already underway for the Spring 2015 semester events. Go to NSU International RiverHawks on Facebook and click "Like" to receive updates on activities.

## **International Students take part in 9/11 Day of Service by serving others**

Several NSU international students participated in the university's 9-11 Day of Service in September. While most of the students were small children during the tragic events that happened on September 11, 2001, they understand the importance of unity, serving others and commemorating such a time in the history of the world by doing something good to give back. Some students cleaned in the University Center while others picked up trash around the campus grounds. "It was heartwarming to see so many nations coming together to work on a project in order to commemorate a day that brought the world together for a short time," says Stephanie Davis Goad, Executive Director

of International Programs. "If everyone would find it in their heart to give something to others every single day, we would be living in a much better world."



## Rowland story continued

request much, just a sighted guide to identify the money. The big thing was, it wasn't a big deal to request stuff. You weren't expecting to hear, 'Oh, no, we don't have that.' I find it ironic – and –sad that you can go to another country and get better services than in your own."

When Rowland first told Donna Shelton, his Spanish instructor, that he wanted to go on the trip, he wasn't even sure if it would be possible.

"I was just glad she had enough respect and confidence in me to let me go," Rowland says.

Dr. Mark Giese, NSU professor of health and kinesiology, who went along on the trip, says he admired Rowland's courage to make the trip.

"He didn't let his blindness get in the way. He walked everywhere we walked. There are people who can make all the excuses in the world not to go, but he didn't."

Rowland hopes to serve as an inspiration to others

who would like to travel the world but fear their physical challenges might get in the way.

"You've only got one shot. I would just go to whomever is in charge and say, 'I really want to go.' Just lay the cards on the table and say, 'I have this disability' and be willing to say 'I will do



as much as I can to be independent."

When asked if he would travel abroad again if given the opportunity, Rowland responds, "I would like to visit Costa Rica next year."

## Search for NSU International Programs, NSU Study Abroad, and NSU International RiverHawks!



Phone: 918-444-2050  
Fax: 918-458-2056  
E-mail: [international@nsuok.edu](mailto:international@nsuok.edu)

**Check us out  
on Facebook!**



More than 90 international students joined the Halloween celebration at the home of the Executive Director of International Programs this year. Each student dressed up for the occasion along with International Programs' entire staff. Fun was had by all.

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## Graduating? Traveling? A letter of reminders from your student advisor

Dear international students,

As we approach the end of the semester, the staff of the Office of International Programs wishes you Happy Holidays. We appreciate your attendance at NSU and consider it a privilege to have worked with you. If you are completing your studies and moving from NSU, we congratulate you on your achievements. Continuing students, congratulations on the successful completion of this semester. We look forward to your return!

To ensure you receive updated information from the OIP throughout the break, check your NSU email. Below are important end-of-semester reminders.

### 1. For Fall 2014 Graduates:

- Deadline to apply for OPT is 60 days after the completion date of your program. The OPT application must be received by USCIS before completion of degree program. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in the loss of your OPT benefit.

- After completion of studies, F-1 students must be in one of the following situations to continue stay legally in the U.S:

- have already applied for OPT
- admitted to a new program at NSU or other institution
- pending case with USCIS for change to another status

If not in any of the above situations, students must depart the USA within 60 days.

- After completion of studies, you are not allowed to continue to work on campus as a student. Any employment after degree completion without the approval from USCIS is considered unauthorized and will jeopardize your immigration status.

- If planning to travel while on OPT, please contact the OIP for detailed instructions.

- If intending to enter another degree program at NSU, please come to the OIP to request a new I-20 reflecting the new program.

- If transferring to another institution, you must contact the OIP for SEVIS transfer process information.

- If you have received a Notice of Action from USCIS regarding a change of your immigration status, please contact the OIP immediately to get your record updated in SEVIS.

### 2. Continuing Students:

#### A) Travel:

-Spring classes start on January 12, please return to NSU before this day.

-If planning to travel during break, make sure the signature on your I-20 is up to date (less than 1 year old). If the signature expired, come to the OIP to get a new one.

-If traveling outside of the U.S, these documents are needed in order to reenter: valid passport, unexpired U.S visa, and an I-20 with current signature.

#### B) Spring Semester Enrollment:

-Make sure you are enrolled in 12 hours for undergraduate and 9 hours for graduate students with no more than 3 hours online.

-Check the academic calendar for important dates [http://](http://www.nsuok.edu/Schedules/Spring2015/AcademicCalendar.aspx)

[www.nsuok.edu/Schedules/Spring2015/AcademicCalendar.aspx](http://www.nsuok.edu/Schedules/Spring2015/AcademicCalendar.aspx)

-If you have concurrent enrollment in another institution, submit a transcript to Admission office to have credits transferred back to NSU.

#### C) Scholarship holders:

-Please check the expiration day on the Letter of Financial Guarantee and make sure to renew it before the semester begin.

#### D) Transferring Out:

- If transferring to a different university, stop by the OIP to complete the procedure of school transfer.

Hope you have a safe and joyful winter break!

Yen Dang

