

# Le Journal

West Virginia State University Office of International Affairs Newsletter

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## West Virginia Delegation Examines Hospitality & Tourism Management in the Czech Republic

In July, an Office of International Affairs (OIA) led delegation of 15 academics and business professionals from WV conducted field and experiential research on Prague's burgeoning tourism industry. The goal of the study was to revive and expand the program in Hospitality and Tourism Management previously offered by the Community and Technical College (CTC).

Charles University with whom the university's Health & Human Performance (HHP) program has a partnership served as hosts. Professors Tomas Cahlik (Econ.) and Vladimir Janak (Sports Pscy.) facilitated the group activities. Cahlik and Janak traveled to West Virginia in July 2006 and joined a similar delegation to Mexico where a partnership was forged with the Universidad del Valle de Mexico in Queretaro. Both trips were activities funded by a grant from the US Department of Education Business and International Education Program.

Apart from the site visits to central Prague and surrounding towns, a Tourism Forum was held at Charles University with industry professionals from the private sector, the government, as well as from Czech academies of higher education. The West Virginia delegation also met separately at the Ibis Hotel in the Smichov district of Prague where they reviewed and discussed tourism in WV, and developed initiatives in curriculum and program development for both the university and the CTC. These initiatives will be reported in *Le Journal* as the program develops.

The delegation was comprised of the following members:

Representing the university and land grant were: Cyrus Aleseyed (Econ), Shelly Braden (Alum), Scott Byars (Ext. Svcs.), Anita Fertig (Ext. Svcs.), T. Ford-Ahmed (Comm/MS), Abainesh Mitiku, (Mngmt.), Ted Muilenburg, (HHP), James Natsis, (OIA) and John Richards (Soc.)



West Virginia delegation in Prague

The Community & Technical College representatives included: Charlotte Finney (Bus. Stud.), Delores Taylor (Bus. Stud.), and Jack Skeens, (Mktg.).

Those from the WV business and tourism sector included: Julie Caldwell, (Pres. -Charleston CVB), Betty Cutlip, (Int'l Mktg. - WV Div. of Tourism), and Geoff Heeter, (Pres. -New River CVB).

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## “A Taste of Ethiopia

Students, staff, faculty and community members were greeted with sounds, sights and scents of Africa as they entered the Wilson University Union on the evening of April 28. The first annual “Taste of Ethiopia” was by all accounts a huge success. “It was excellent. We couldn’t have asked for a better evening,” stated the President of the Ethiopian Student Association, Robel Hailu.

“The students did a really good job,” said Professor of Business Management, and native of Ethiopia, Dr. Abainesh Mitiku. “I was especially pleased by the way they represented the various regions of Ethiopia.” Dr. Mitiku has developed a special relationship with the growing number of Ethiopian students. “They represent the next group of leaders in our country.”

The Ethiopian students were well prepared to feed their guests who numbered around 200. “We were concerned that there would not be enough food so we arrived early. Both my wife and I love Ethiopian food and were delighted that there was more than enough to go around,” said Professor of History, Dr. Billy Joe Peyton. “We look forward to next year’s dinner,” he added.

In addition to excellent food there was a program rich in Ethiopian fashion, music, and information about the country. “The students were very accommodating,



**Ethiopian student performance**

always speaking to their guests and making sure that everyone was enjoying themselves,” said a community member who attended with her husband. “I would have liked to have seen a bigger fashion show, but the students made up for it by wearing beautiful traditional outfits,” she added.

## Multicultural Festival

The 16th Annual Multicultural/Disability Festival Day was held on May 3rd inside the Wilson University Union. Students, faculty, staff, and community members enjoyed a wide range of activities including henna painting, Indian dancing, belly dancing, live music, exhibit and awareness tables, and ethnic food samples and cultural displays. Among the ethnic tables were the Alpha Mu Gamma Honor Society featuring foods from the French- and Spanish-speaking worlds, African, Asian, and Latin American cuisine. A special feature this year was the human race machine that took a digital photo of a given participant and revealed images of what that person would look like as members of different races.

“This was my first year, but based on attendance and feedback from students and colleagues it was very successful. It was well attended and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves,” stated Multicultural Counselor, LaKeisha Barron-Brown. “I found great pleasure in seeing students getting involved and interacting within a multicultural context. Even though I am the Multicultural Counselor, I learned a lot myself.”



**Belly dancers perform at the Multicultural Festival**

The annual event was sponsored by the Multicultural Office of Collegiate Support & Counseling, Student Activities, the Higher Education Policy Commission, the Student Government Association, and the Research & Development Corporation.

# Summer Spanish Immersion in Mexico

by Evelyn Caro

I am privileged to be the first student from West Virginia State University to study at the Universidad del Valle de Mexico Queretaro campus following the trip made by WVSU faculty in 2006 to develop a study abroad experience with the university.

I went to Mexico this past summer with no preconceived notions, i.e., stereotypes. This helped my smooth and immediate transition into the Mexican lifestyle. I was met at the airport by the university's Director for International Students, Peter Gardner. He explained to me that my host family was not quite ready for me and that I would be staying with his family for a few days. We were greeted by his wife Patty upon arrival at Gardner's home. After settling in we retreated to the living room where we talked for a while. I was offered dinner with lemon ice cream for desert and then turned in for the night with a pitcher of water. It was pretty cool that I was given the entire second floor to myself.

The next morning I went down for breakfast and then we commenced a short tour of the city. I found Queretaro uniquely historical and colorful. We did not stay out long because siesta time was approaching. We returned home, like everyone else in the city, to have our meal and be with family.

After spending 4 days with Peter's family, my host family was ready for me and my first day of classes were to begin. We took my luggage over to the house where I met Aurora who showed me my room. Then Peter and I were off to the university for my first meeting with my Spanish language instructor.



My instructor, Cecilia Pineda, was a wonderfully caring person. Instead of testing me my first day, she started teaching me the basics to gage my language acumen.



**Evelyn Caro in Queretaro**

That proved to be an excellent strategy because after a day or two my memory was jogged and my Spanish language skills began to surface.

My goal for this immersion was to return to "State" and test out of Spanish 201 & 202. With that in mind I took along the requirements needed to master those classes. Senora Pineda thought that that was a wonderful idea and taught me from these materials.

Three weeks passes swiftly, and in that time I learned a lot about Mexican culture, the language, and the people. Going to Wal-Mart, for example, became part of my education—the lesson was about differences. I went on field trips, and purchased items from stores while practicing the language.

When I met my "Duena" (house mother), Letti Alvarez, I learned that she too was a wonderful person. She said the most important thing to her is that, "you are happy!" She had an amazingly calming personality which made me feel comfortable speaking Spanish with her. She inquired after my needs and offered to buy anything that would make my stay better. When I got sick toward the end of my stay, she went to the pharmacy and bought medicine for me. All and all she and her family were wonderful.

It was indeed an educational and richly rewarding cultural experience. I especially enjoyed the people I met who were all extremely helpful, and enjoyed putting forth an effort to converse in their language. Gracias "State!"

Evelyn Caro is a Senior English Major

## Former Vice President of Academic Affairs Visits South Africa at The Behest of Ohio University

In the late 90's Stephen Howard, Director of African Studies at Ohio University (OU) met with then Vice President of Academic Affairs, Barbara Oden, to discuss WVSU's participation in a grant application to the US Department of Education. Ohio University was seeking to become a National Resource Center for African Studies. OU was awarded the grant and has since developed into a model educational and cultural hub for African Studies. As a result, both universities have benefited through conferences, faculty, and student interaction. Perhaps the hallmark of the cooperative agreement was realized this summer when a former "State" alumnus now employed by OU, arranged for Dr. Oden (since retired) to travel to South Africa to consult with administrators, faculties, and students at both universities and secondary schools who are experiencing educational reform similar to those that occurred here in the US during the 50's following the desegregation of schools.

Oden arrived on "State's" campus during those years to begin her academic career as a biology teacher. During her tenure she served in numerous capacities, ending her 40+ years as the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Her nearly month-long stay in South Africa this summer allowed her to share here experience and insights with Vice Chancellors, faculty, and administrators of South Africa's "new" democratization



Ms. Chamane, T. Ford-Ahmed, and Barbara Oden in front of the Mandela Mural inside the Apartheid Museum

efforts. They were "much valued and appreciated," according to the Vice Chancellor of the 37,000 enrolled University of the Western Cape. Following meetings with faculty at the University of Pretoria, Tswane University, and International Affairs Director at the University of Fort Hare (Mandela's Alma Mater), a desire for cooperative teaching/research/student exchanges was expressed to professor T. Ford-Ahmed, who accompanied Oden on the trip.

Although a great deal of time was spent in meetings and conferences, Oden stated that she "received an education of a lifetime" and added, "The politics of apartheid was near dehumanizing. There is such a vibrant

entrepreneurship occurring here now and although you can feel the passion of newly freed people, I worry that it is a fragile peace."

Before leaving the continent one of her many gracious hosts, Frij Karuna, President & CEO of Harry's Printing Corp, arranged a visit to a Game Reserve where Dr. Oden fulfilled her life long dream of seeing three of the "Big Five" (the lion, buffalo, and rhinoceros).

Dr. Oden currently serves as a volunteer Board Member to the community organization MAACK (Maximizing African-American Children in Kanawha County) to ensure that black and low income children are afforded the opportunity to succeed.

# Spring 2007 Study Tour to Prague

During Spring Break (March 14-22), Professors of Communication/Media Studies, Daniel and Robin Boyd led a group of 14 students, several alumni, and community members to the Czech Republic for a Study Tour. Several of the students had participated in the Prague trip led by the Boyds during previous years and benefited from it so much that they signed on again. Mark Totten, a Communication/Media Studies major, participated in his second spring break trip to Prague. "I just loved the city and wanted to return because there is so much to see and do," said Totten during an interview at the International Affairs Office. "The first time I followed the group and enjoyed myself tremendously. This time I ventured off and visited the Museum of Communism and other cultural sites that I was unable to visit during my first trip," he added.

Students expressed their views in a post-study trip evaluation issued by the professors on behalf of the Office of International Affairs. Joe Wallace had traveled to other parts of Europe over the years as well as to Mexico, the Bahamas, and Canada. He saw the study tour as one that will "enable me to better evaluate societal needs and improve interpersonal relationships after college." The only regret he expressed was that in the spring the weather is unpredictable. He would like to see such an experience offered during the summer. Alice Dunn, who had been an exchange high school student in Montpelier, France, also participated in the WVSU London Theatre Tour last year led by David Wohl, Dean of Arts and Humanities. The Prague trip made a strong impression on Alice. "Not only has it allowed me to experience a culture which is different from any I have known before, but it is also an excellent opportunity to study a beautiful language not offered at WVSU. I would call this study-tour the highlight of my education at this university."

Sharon Downs also took part in the trip for a second time in two years. She views the experience as "a valuable part of the Communication/Media Studies Program." As for Anna Addesa,

although she immensely enjoyed the experience, she did have a grievance. "I wish the organizers had not eaten at McDonalds. McDonalds should be burned down. It breaks the entire illusion of wonderful Prague when you pass by." Although she was frustrated with the presence of McDonalds, she sought comfort in some of the delicious ice cream offerings found in Prague. "The ice cream is amazing," she wrote.

Miguel Mendez, originally from an ethnically diverse community in the Bronx, New York, traveled outside of the US for the first time. "Thanks to the Boyds and the support of the Office of International Affairs this trip was possible," said Mendez in an interview with *Le Journal*. "It would be difficult for me to summarize all that we did, but I will say that I have a better appreciation for what immigrants have gone through in our country not knowing the language or having a full understanding of the culture."

Daniel and Robin Boyd have provided study abroad opportunities to an increasing number of students and community members over the years. In addition to the multiple trips to Prague that Daniel and Robin have organized, Daniel has led groups to other parts of the world including Tanzania, Venezuela, Russia, and Belize. He has also enabled international students and scholars to study and participate in academic projects at WVSU and within the West Virginia community.



Students in Prague

# West Virginia State Community and Technical College News

## Summer Study Tour of Italy and Greece

by Melanie Walters, Lead Instructor of Humanities

We were told it would be the experience of a lifetime! What an understatement. In more ways than one, this was true. There were magnificent sights and a near intolerable heat wave, but we survived and thrived in the two countries of Italy and Greece.

Students Sarah and daughter Rebecca Harper, Paige Nossaman, Dee Dee and husband Frank Snodgrass, Brandon Sylvester, Edwin Weddle, and I joined a group of twenty on the ten day tour through parts of Italy and Greece.

Rome reminded us of New York City. There was graffiti everywhere and the city was dirty and crowded. But there were also beautiful umbrella pines and many men and women on motor scooters. Entering the Vatican City was a step back in time. We went through a maze to get to the Sistine Chapel. We walked through hallways and up and down narrow stairwells to view incredible paintings. It took nearly an hour or so before we entered the Sistine Chapel. Tears ran down my face as I realized I was finally there, gazing up at the Creation of Adam and the Fall of Humankind.

Half of us took a day trip to Florence, Italy which was more

pristine than Rome. It was a little cooler, not as dirty and featured older buildings.

A replica of Michelangelo's David was our first thrill of the day. Because of the many statues located in Florence one can almost feel the spirit of Galileo and others in this beautiful city. Seeing the skyline of Florence, with Brunelleschi's Dome in the distance, was breathtaking. We were also captivated by the famous bronzed doors – Ghiberti's legendary Gates of Paradise – at the Baptistry, opposite the Duomo.

Following our trip to Sorrento and the island of Capri, we traveled to Pompeii. The roads of ancient

Pompeii are made up of huge stones and the guide pointed out to us the dented areas traversed by chariots. This gave us a sense of history coming alive! Two bodies encased in glass were the highlights of Pompeii. They appeared to have been sleeping when the deadly gases from the volcano killed them instantly.

We took an overnight ferry to ancient Greece. We rode a bus along the Mediterranean Sea and stopped for a delicious lunch on the way to Delphi from the port city of Patras. We even ventured into the freezing Sea, which proved to be refreshing in the daunting heat!



Study abroad group at Charleston's Yeager airport before departure to Italy

Athens is a city of five million people, half of the population of Greece. It was more Americanized with restaurants such as Friday's and Dunkin Donuts. From the bus we could see the Parthenon in the distance. We enjoyed a cultural evening of singing and dancing. The belly dancer even invited some of the students to join her. THAT proved to be funny, as they tried to imitate every move she made.

On the last day in Greece only ten of us from the combined group of twenty-seven people went to the Parthenon. In spite of the heat and humidity, it was exciting to experience this monument of history. It is currently five years into a fifteen year restoration and it is our hope that we can return in 2017 to see it completed. (This time however, we will

plan our visit during the cooler fall or spring). Not far from the Parthenon on the Acropolis stands the Temple of Athena Nike. The guide pointed out that our Statue of Liberty is modeled after those statues.

As the lead instructor of humanities and for my humanities students, we all felt this trip was an experience of a lifetime. As Edwin Weddle put it in his paper for this course, "Experiencing Rome and Greece has forever changed my life." Brandon Sylvester says he now understands why Rome serves as the core of the Roman Catholic Church. Rebecca Nossman added, "This trip made

our humanities textbooks come alive!" All of these places we study in humanities: the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, the Pantheon, Michelangelo's David, the Coliseum, the Parthenon, the Olympic stadium – are now embedded in our memories. I am looking at the possibilities of more trips, depending on the interests of my students.



**Piazza Navona in Rome. Back to Front: Rebecca Nossaman, Page Nossaman, Diana Snodgrass, Sarah Harper, and Scott Snodgrass**

## International Educational Exchange

The Institute of International Education (IIE) is a global leader in the exchange of people and ideas.

IIE conducts research and provides information on international study to students, prospective students, educators, government officials, and business leaders worldwide through publications, conferences, seminars, advising, and web-based services. Open Doors is the key publication with comprehensive accurate information on the international students in the United States and on U.S. students who

sojourn abroad as part of their academic experience.

Of particular interest are national figures on the number of U.S. students studying abroad, and their race/ethnicity. Figures from the 2004-2005 academic year show that a total of 205,000 students had a study abroad experience. Among them only 5.6% were Hispanic/Latino and 3.5% African-American. Asian-Americans fared better with 6.3% traveling abroad. The United Kingdom was the leading destination receiving 15.6% of total U.S. students studying

abroad, followed by Italy (12.1%), Spain (10.1%), France (7.5%), Australia (5.2%), and Mexico (4.5%). No African nation was listed as a top 20 destination. As for international students studying in U.S. universities, Indian students represented (13.5%), followed by China (11.1%), South Korea (10.4%), Japan (6.9%), and Canada (5%). Students coming from Latin America represent approximately (5-6%) of total international students. International students from Europe and Africa represent about 3-4% respectively of the total international student body in the U.S.

# Discovery Network Executive Keynotes “Global Communication Day”

Frederick Nnoma-Addison an Assistant to the President Discovery Studios, Discovery Communications was the Luncheon Keynote for the annual Communication Day event held last spring in the Wilson Student Union sponsored by SuddenLink, West Virginia's premiere cable-internet provider. Nnoma-Addison grounded much of his presentation in his own experience as a person of Ghanaian heritage working for a US corporation who offers global perspectives through multi-dimensional programming.

Of particular interest to students was the life and adventures of Steve Irwin, better known as the Crocodile Hunter who since October of 1996 was instrumental in building Discovery Network's Animal Planet into a global brand. Nnoma-Addison stated that Irwin had “millions of fans and animal lovers throughout the world and

was one of the planet's most passionate conservationists. His tragic death while filming a show for the network has since left a void that is going to be hard to fill.” He also encouraged students to travel and learn other languages in order to provide them “an edge in the fiercely competitive field of communication.” Following the Keynote Nnoma-Addison held an open dialogue with students answering questions. Le Ann Hughes, a graduate student of Media Studies stated that “the time spent with our guest today is one of the most informative and interesting experiences I've had since attending ‘State.’” In addition to Nnoma-Addison's work at Discovery he is founder and President of the DC based Africa Media-Image Project [www.afroimage.tv.org](http://www.afroimage.tv.org), which advocates for more objective international media coverage of

African Affairs, and is recognized by the World Bank and the African Diplomatic Corps in Washington. He is also completing his MBA at Georgetown University.

Communication Day is an event that awards the best and brightest students in advertising, broadcasting, film, internet development, marketing, public relations, screenwriting, speech, and theater. Of particular note was a special award to Matt Woods for his support to the Communication/Media Studies department, and James Stockton for his tourism/marketing campaign plan presented to the Botswana Embassy in Washington DC.

This year's event was presented by Women in Communication, the Public Relations Student Society of America, and the Middle States African Studies Association.



**Frederick Nnoma-Addison and Ghanian President, John Kufuor**



**Frederick Nnoma-Addison and Christina Williams, graduate student in Media Studies**

# An Interactive Forum on Islam

On April 19, an afternoon audience of over 50 students, faculty, staff, and community members were able to participate in an interactive forum on Islam, thanks to the initiative of Dimitrios Paparoupas, the efforts of the Student Support Services, and the service support group, Nyanssa. Paparoupas, a major in Nuclear Medicine Technology at the WVSCCTC, invited the Imam of the Islamic Association of West Virginia, Mohammad Jamal Daoudi, to the Wilson University Union to lead a discussion on Islam. "I was inspired by my World History and Political Science professors," confided Paparoupas, "so I decided that I needed to take some course of action." OIA Director, James Natsis, commended Paparoupas on his initiative. "It is inspiring to see a student take the lead on such an activity," stated Natsis.

Before introducing the guest speaker, Student Support Services Program Coordinator, Patty Roseborough, offered a reminder of the Student Support Services mission. "We do more than just tutor students. We offer a wide gamut of activities in an effort to widen our students' horizons."

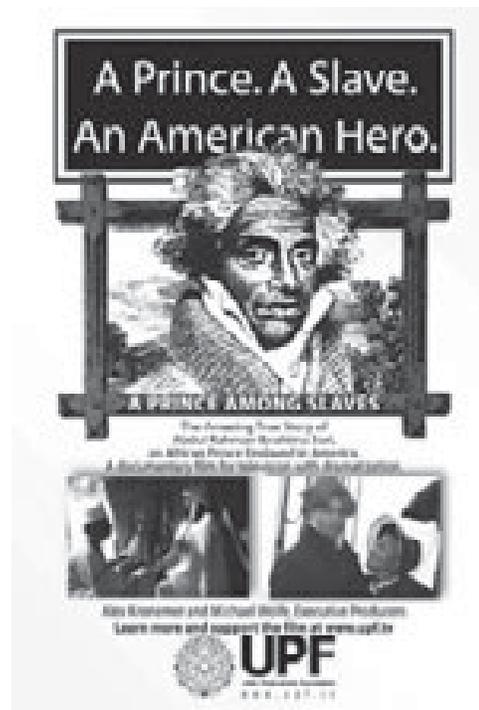
Imam Jamal Daoudi offered a brief overview of Islam before entertaining questions. He informed participants that "only about 20% of the Muslim population in the world is Arab. In fact, Indonesia has the largest Muslim population." He continued explaining that the total population of Indonesia is almost equal to the population of the entire Arab world.

According to the Imam, the Islamic center of Charleston has a membership of about 150 persons. In addition to these paying members there are many others who frequent the Center as well. "There are about 200 families in the area and about 300 around the state of West Virginia," stated the Imam. For more information please contact the Islamic Association of West Virginia at [www.iawv.org](http://www.iawv.org) or (304) 744-1031/744-4431.



Imam Jamal Daoudi

**West Virginia Cultural Center**  
**October 27, 2007**  
**6:00 - 9:00 pm**



Presented by the Middle States African Studies Association, the Office of International Affairs, Islamic Center of Charleston, Gypsy Promotion LLC, and Communication 205 class

## International Profile: Ernest Sekabunga

*Le Journal* spoke to Professor of Chemistry, Ernest Sekabunga, at a cozy Tai restaurant near the WVSU campus to share his story while dining on curry chicken and pad tai noodles. “Next time we will have to meet in an Indian restaurant because you know as a Ugandan I really love curry-flavored food,” explained Sekabunga with a smile.

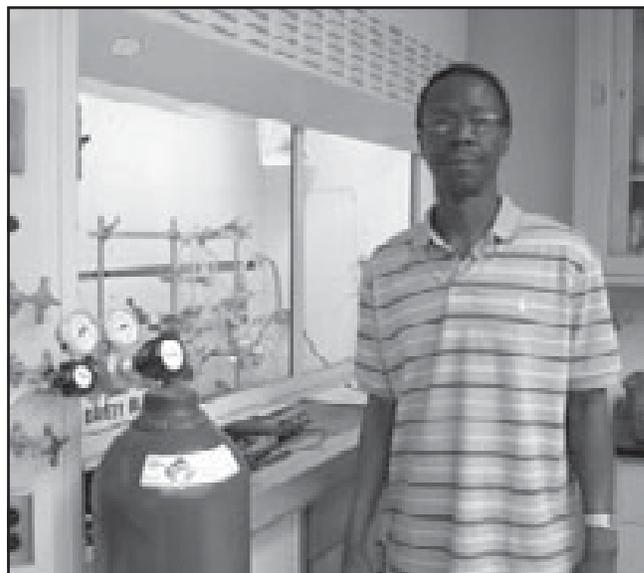
Dr. Sekabunga was born and raised in Uganda’s bustling capital city, Kampala. His longing for Indian food comes from the influence of a large Indian population that in spite of their forced exodus at the command of dictator, Idi Amin, in the early 1970s, remains an important community in the East African nation of Uganda.

Always a good student in science, Sekabunga was influenced by one of his science teachers who sparked his interest in chemistry and pharmacy. During his junior year in high school, Makerere University opened a school of Industrial Chemistry. Upon completing his high school diploma, Sekabunga was admitted into the chemistry program at Makerere and accepted as a member of the third class to enter the Industrial Chemistry program.

He finished his BSC in Industrial Chemistry and landed a job with the government as a factory inspector. He quickly moved on to manage a rubber production plant for the Bata Shoe Company in Kampala. “I had applied to become a trainee in production management. When I was told that I was not selected I went to the plant to meet with the human resources manager anyway. I ended up speaking with him for a longtime about everything and anything. At the same time the managing director arrived and began speaking with me. The managing director was impressed with a particular response to one of his questions and hired me on the spot,” explained Sekabunga.

Sekabunga realized the importance of continuing his education so he matriculated to the Masters in Chemical Technology at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology in

Manchester, England. His advisor had colleagues at the University of Auburn in Alabama and thus assisted in his admission there where he spent the next 5 years earning a Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry. He was then hired as a visiting professor of Chemistry at SUNY Oswego in upstate New York where he worked for the next two years before accepting a full-time position in the Department of Chemistry in the fall of 1998 at West Virginia State University.



Ernest Sekabunga

In addition to teaching courses in chemistry, Sekabunga stays active in the field of research and experimentation. He initially worked with phosphine coordination chemistry—phosphorous ligands complexing silver. More recently his attention has turned to working on complexing various metal ions out of water. “West Virginia has a lot of contaminated water streams due to mining activities over the years. I am trying to develop systems to pull metal ions out of the water,” he passionately explains.

He enjoys his research and especially working with students. “I have had some really excellent students during my years here at State,” he says. “They truly make it worth while. I have seen some go on to medical and pharmacy schools and I am especially proud to have played a role.”

# International Profile: Tae Jin Park

Professor of History, Tae Jin Park, better known as “TJ”, is originally from Seoul, the capital of South Korea. Leaving most of his family behind, Park moved to the US in 1993 to study at the State University in Albany, New York where he attained his master’s degree in American Diplomatic History. Park explained that during this period American foreign policy heavily

“Influenced Korean development, [and] this is why I chose to look at the history of US foreign policy.”

While studying in Albany, Park came to know Dr. Wesley Bagby, who was a professor at West Virginia University. Bagby had written a book on East Asian-American relations, which provided detailed accounts of what interested Park. “So, I decided to attend WVU to work on my Ph.D. because of Bagby,” explained Park, “though he passed away while I was there.”

After earning his Ph.D. in history at WVU, Park was offered a temporary job, teaching at West Virginia State University. “At first there were a lot of difficulties in teaching the students,” explained Park. “It was hard for the students to understand what I was saying.” However, Park quickly grew accustomed to teaching his students and the language barrier no longer hindered their interaction.

Park now teaches World History and American Diplomatic History at WVSU. He is especially interested in the diplomatic and cultural relations between America and Eastern Asia. He enjoys reading Korean and other foreign newspapers on-line in order to stay current. “At first I didn’t read much from back home,” he confessed. “But I eventually found that South Korean or other Asian reporting offered a rich perspective. Like in the case of China, for example. Many South Koreans and Japanese have visited China because they have a long history together. These people have a different understanding of the country.”

Professor Park loves living and working in West Virginia because of the rich tradition of southern

hospitality that he feels. “West Virginians are friendly and there are a variety of non-traditional people here,” said Park. “I also like it very much because my colleagues and faculty members are nice and friendly.” In spite of his positive view of West Virginia he does have one area of contention. “I just can’t find good food from home,” he stated. Given the ever increasing process of globalization, that may be changing in the not so distant future.

*Written by Justin Waybright, a former work-study student in the OIA.*

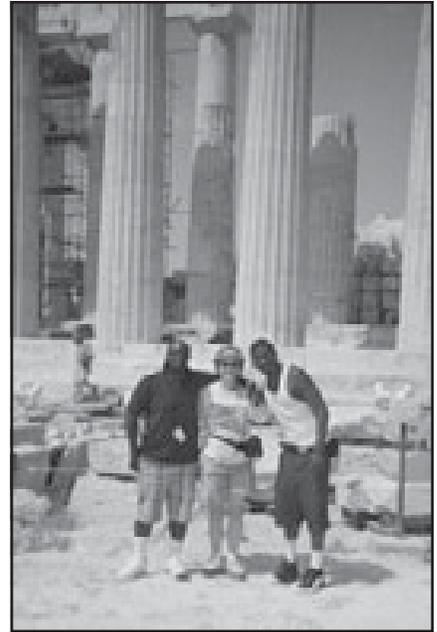


**Tae Jin Park**

# Students, Faculty, and Guests



Students enjoy exhibits at the Multicultural Festival



L - R: Edwin Waddle, Melanie Walters, and Brandon Sylvester at the Acropolis in Athens, Greece



Professor of Communication, Tee Ford-Ahmed accepts picture book from the Mayor of Terezin, Czech Republic



Former WVSU Vice President of Academic Affairs, Barbara Oden, meets a group of South African high school students in SOWETO

# Students, Faculty, and Guests



**Ph.D. candidate at Charles University (Prague), Vit Kolar (left) assisting with the WV Geri Olympics**



**University of Charleston International Director, Audrey Pitonak (far right), and James Natsis (third from right), at the University of Charleston WorldFest**



**Monique Juliot, native of the Alsace region in France, and current resident of Ravenswood, WV, delivers a speech on the French electoral system at the Cercle Français (French Circle)**



**Student Support Services Program Coordinator, Patty Rosebough, introduces Imam Jamal Daouli of the Islamic Association of West Virginia at the Interactive Forum on Islam held in the WVSU Wilson University Union**

## French Scholar Conducts Research in the Mountain State

Christine Soulas had a chance to spend her sabbatical from the Université Rennes 2 in the sunny state of California. But after a short visit to Marshall University during the month of August to discuss the details of an exchange agreement between the two institutions, and a little coaxing from Marshall's Director of International Programs, Clark Egnor, she decided to come to the "mountain state" to conduct her research on access to higher education in the United States. "I'm glad I decided to come here because California is so big, while here I have much more intimate contact with people," said Professor Soulas.

Professor of English, Barbara Ladner accompanied her to the campus in April to conduct interviews with key members of the campus family, and to deliver a guest lecture to the Introduction to International Studies class taught by professors Natsis and Ford-Ahmed.

After a brief introduction to faculty in the Modern Foreign Language Department, Professor Soulas met with the Director of Student Retention, to better understand student access and retention here at "State." She later met with Associate Professor and Department Chair of Education, Bob Harrison, to further discuss issues of higher education on the campus and within the state of West Virginia.

Professor Soulas held a captive audience during her lecture to the students in the Introduction to International Studies Class. She explained that French students only needed to pass the "baccalaureate exam," or "exit exam" to have access to any public university and program that they wish to attend. "There are special preparatory classes for those who wish to enter the *grandes écoles* which are elite establishments. But otherwise you only need a bac," she explained. Communications student, Courtney Wallace, asked if there was a way to earn the equivalent of a GED in France if one did not pass the bac, or if one dropped out before completing high school. "Yes, but you have to wait three years. You

are better off sitting for the bac exam, because you actually have to work harder for a GED since you will end up forgetting a lot by then," she replied.

Students were especially attentive to her discussion regarding the cost of education in France. "It costs about \$300 for a full year to attend a public university in France," she said. "The *grandes écoles* are a little more expensive, especially the private ones, but they are still much cheaper than in the US," she continued.

On a final note, she shared her concern for the



**Christine Soulas**

image of France among many Americans, especially in light of the animosity created between the U.S. and France during the months preceding and following the U.S. invasion of Iraq in April 2003. "I try to see the people of a country for who they are. Although I enjoy following politics, I am not going to judge a country by the politics of their government. I did not vote for Jacques Chirac like many of you did not vote for George Bush. It is the people we meet as individuals that are important."

# THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

## How would you advise President Bush regarding Iraq over the final year of his presidency?

That if he is to keep troops longer in Iraq, he needs to do it wisely; troops need to be relieved and rotated out of there as opposed to keeping them there for 18 months or 2 years. The U.S. also needs to make sure that the proper support and equipment is made available for the soldiers. *Katie Bailey, Board of Regents Degree*

(Note: SGT Katie Bailey served in the 310th MP BN/157th MP Co in Ad Diwanya, Iraq from June-November 2003)

Take a leaf out of Nixon's notebook: "We have lived up to our pledge to defend democracy, and did the best we could." Walter Cronkite 1968. *Sean McCracken, Board of Regents Degree*

I wouldn't want to—Who wants that headache! *Nina Hudson, Board of Regents Degree*

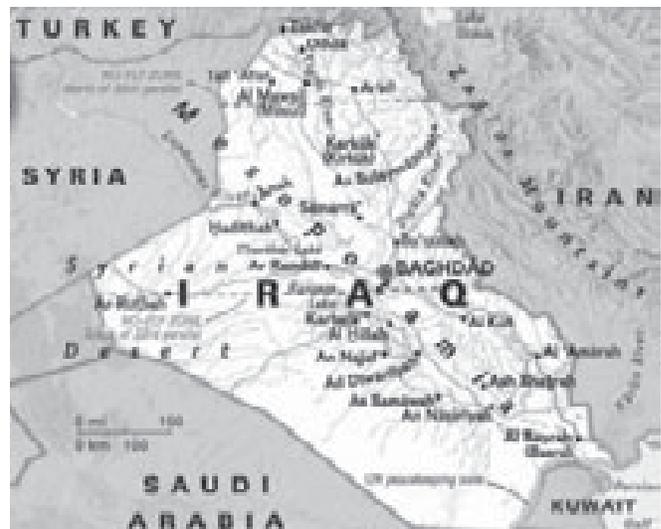
Although I believe the troops should withdraw from Iraq, I understand that may not be so easy. If Bush is determined to keep the troops there, relations need to improve. A more diplomatic approach is necessary. Fighting insurgents will not end the war. Insurgents will be replaced by more insurgents. A stable Iraqi government is needed to end the war. *Sarah Elliot, History*

Resign! *Austin Moore, Political Science*

I would advise that, as much as it pains me to say it, to do what he has been doing all this time and stay the course. Although I wholeheartedly disagree with nearly everything he has done, I believe that making moves to pull out of Iraq this late in the game would be disastrous. Not to mention he would be distracted by the election and who he hopes to support. *Ben Hawley, Professional Writing*

I believe he did this with all great intentions, but it doesn't seem like what we are doing is working. I'm not there so I don't really know what's going on, but I believe our troops need to come home already. I think we're upset at this point and we've killed enough people. I guess he's [Bush] doing what he has to do and I suppose I would tell him to stick with what he knows is right, but step aside when the next president comes in and let him [or her] decide what is best for our country. *Jocelyn Briggs, Board of Regents Degree*

I believe Bush should bring all our troops home. There is absolutely no reason we should be over there. I personally know someone who was there and he had no understanding of what he was doing except making himself a target to get killed. The Iraqis have been fighting each other for years and don't want help or want us there in general. So why be in that country? There are too many people getting killed. When will enough be enough? *Shatidra White, Biology/Nursing*



## The John A. Maxwell Scholar-Diplomat Program 2007

Each spring a delegation of West Virginia faculty gather in the nation's capital to participate in a scholar-diplomat program sponsored by the West Virginia Consortium for Faculty and Course Development in International Studies (FACDIS). This year's theme was titled "Latin America: Challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The delegation members participated in a wide range of faculty development activities over the course of 3 days that included lunch with the Venezuelan Ambassador, lunch with the Counselor for Bolivia, a tour of the Voice of America, and meetings with scholars and historians specializing in Latin America from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Latin America Working Group, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, the U.S. State Department, and Howard University. The delegation was headed by FACDIS Director and Professor of History at WVU, Jack Hammersmith, and FACDIS Assistant Director, Gretchen Peteric. Delegation members from WVSU this year were T.J. Park (Department of History) and James Natsis (Office of International Affairs.)

Established in 1980, FACDIS is a consortium of 20 West Virginia institutions of higher education with over 375 participating faculty in international studies and foreign languages from more than fifteen different disciplines.



2007 Maxwell Scholars

FACDIS has twice received national recognition for its work: a Certificate of Excellence in TIAA-CREF's 2000 Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Faculty Development to Enhance Undergraduate Teaching; and the 1987 G. Theodore Mitau Award for Innovation and Change in Higher Education, conferred on the Consortium by American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).

A Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education supported FACDIS' organization and funding during its first three years. Since 1984 FACDIS has received its annual operating budget from the state higher education governing boards and participating institutions. Special projects have been funded by \$1.5 million in external grants.

The annual John A. Maxwell Scholar-Diplomat Program in Washington, DC brings West Virginia faculty together with policy-makers and experts in world affairs.

The John A. Maxwell Program is named in memory of the late Co-Director of FACDIS, who served in this capacity from 1984-1996. The Scholar-Diplomat Program was originally Dr. Maxwell's idea, and was renamed to honor his memory with the Spring 1996 program.

The sole criterion for faculty participation in FACDIS is that the faculty member *teach* one or more courses with significant international content. Faculty members must complete an Information Form, providing information on their academic background and relevant international courses that they teach before they can be added to the FACDIS mailing list. For more information contact the WVSU FACDIS Representative, James Natsis at [natsisja@wvstateu.edu](mailto:natsisja@wvstateu.edu), or the FACDIS office at [www.polsci.wvu.edu/FACDIS](http://www.polsci.wvu.edu/FACDIS).

# WV Higher Education Policy Commission and International Education

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) awarded its first Institutional Grants for Internationalization during the spring of 2007. A total of six public institutions of higher education each received \$15,000 for a 1-year period to implement sustainable programs that seek to internationalize their majors, core curricula, and foreign language programs with some impact on international student enrollment, or sending WV students abroad. The first year grant award recipients were: 1) Concord University, 2) Fairmont State University, 3) Marshall Community and Technical College, 4) Shepherd University, 5) West Virginia State University, and 6) West Virginia University.

In addition to funding the six universities and community college the HEPC, through the international consortium, has planned the following activities for the 2007-08 academic year:

1. The development and maintenance of a website at: [www.studywv.org](http://www.studywv.org).
2. Monitor outstanding Institutional Grants for Internationalization and awarding new grants.
3. Hold a 1-day Training Workshop for Administrating the ISEP Exchange Programs. The ISEP Exchange Programs will allow WV students to have a wider range of study abroad opportunities.
4. Hold a consortium progress report luncheon during international week (November). The luncheon will be held during the afternoon before the evening Cyrus Vance Award ceremony.
5. Providing NAFSA Travel Grants for the May 2008 national NAFSA conference to be held in Washington, DC.
6. Hold a 1-day Spring Workshop for the Administration of International Student Recruitment and Retention Programs. The conference will also serve as an orientation to the NAFSA conference.
7. Host a delegation of overseas educational advisers who will tour West Virginia and visit universities during May 2008 in conjunction with the College Board and the U.S. State Department.

The Consortium for Internationalizing Higher Education was established by the West Virginia HEPC in May 2006. The Consortium seeks to enhance the globalization of every public and private higher education institution in West Virginia. A council of leaders from higher education, business, and government has been appointed to provide the necessary leadership to guide the consortium and provide a strategic plan for internationalizing higher education throughout the State.

## Summer Study Abroad 2008 An Introduction to the Political Identity of Canada

**Political Science 399**

**Students will travel to Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa**

**Instructor: James Natsis, 302 Hill Hall**

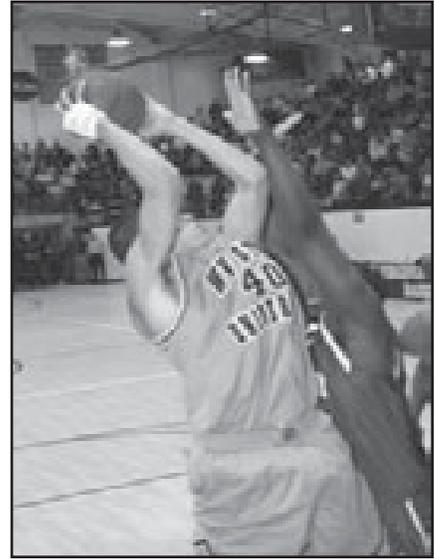
**766-4249**

**[natsisja@wvstateu.edu](mailto:natsisja@wvstateu.edu)**

## WVSU Basketball Player Selected to Play for Danish Team

When the fall 2007 basketball season begins Joe Benjamin will be on the court as he was for a number of years at “State.” But this time he will be yelling out to his teammates in Danish instead of English. In a recent telephone interview with *Le Journal*, Benjamin (BS Comm. 07), stated that he visited several recruiting camps after graduation but found that most recruiters were not interested in Division II players. He learned that his former teammate Tony Cornet had signed a contract to play ball in Iceland and decided to contact him. Tony’s father steered him to an agent who was recruiting for a Danish league. Benjamin sent the recruiter a tape that highlighted his strengths and an offer was made.

Benjamin left for Denmark in August to prepare for Abayhoj Basketball Team’s season opener in October. When asked how he would get along with a team where they all speak Danish, he replied, “I already speak several languages and would like to learn Danish.” *Le Journal* will seek a lengthier interview with Benjamin for the spring 2008 edition.



Joe Benjamin

## Russian Student Joins Women’s Tennis Team

Anna Varonayte arrived during the height of the August heat in Charleston in time to begin practice in preparation for the fall tennis season. “Anna was one of about 60 Russian students whose resumes I reviewed from a recruiter,” said tennis coach, John Simms. “I asked for 20 videos of the 60 students, and then selected 3 finalists. One student decided to spend one more year playing tennis in Russia, while another opted to study at Wichita State, a division one school with a good tennis program. Anna accepted my offer and we are delighted to have her here.”

The first few weeks presented a difficult transition for the St. Petersburg native. “I had several challenges here—it was very different,” said Anna during a

break from an afternoon practice session. “I am still having difficulties with the language and I am used to eating vegetables and fruits back home. People like hamburgers and fries here. But I find the pizza to be good in the cafeteria and eat it every day!” she confided.

According to Coach Simms, Anna plans on spending four years at WVSU pursuing a degree in Business Administration, improving her English and understanding of WV and American culture, and earning her tennis scholarship through hard work on the courts. *Le Journal* will stay in touch with Anna and report on her adaptation to life in West Virginia in the spring issue.



Anna Varonayte

# The Language Corner

## Navajo

Navajo, also known as Diné, belongs to the Athabaskan branch of the Na-Dené language family. Most of the Diné homeland is in northern Arizona, but it also extends into southern Utah and northwestern New Mexico. It is the largest language of the Na-Dené language family.

With some 163,000 speakers, Navajo is one of the few North American Indian languages with a growing population of speakers, but even among the Navajos only 17% of school children speak the language when they enter school.

## Cherokee

Cherokee belongs to the Iroquoian language family. Linguists believe that the Cherokee people migrated to the southeast from the Great Lakes region about three thousand years ago. Despite the three-thousand-year geographic separation, the Cherokee language today still shows similarities to the languages spoken around the Great Lakes, such as Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Tuscorora, and Wyandot-Huron.

Cherokee speakers constitute the seventh largest group of speakers of native languages north of Mexico. Despite the size of the population, Cherokee is an endangered language. The good news is that increasing numbers of Cherokee descendants are renewing their ties with their traditions, history and language. With this renewal comes the understanding that their Cherokee heritage must be preserved and passed on to the next generation. In some communities in eastern Oklahoma and western North Carolina, Cherokee is now used by speakers of all ages. In Qualla and the Cherokee Nation, Cherokee linguists are working to ensure that the Cherokee language survives.

Source: <http://www.nvtc.gov/lotw/languageList.html>

## INTERNATIONAL STUDIES MINOR

*“A Minor with Major Benefits”*

The *Introduction to International Studies* course will be offered in the Spring 2008 semester. The General Education course is team-taught by T. Ford-Ahmed and James Natsis.

Through the use of readings, lectures, films, and group activities the course moves along a journey that encompasses the regions and continents of the world in an effort to establish a base from which other content courses in international studies may be approached with more sophisticated awareness for working across national and cultural boundaries.

To obtain more information regarding the International Studies minor, visit the Office of International Affairs, 302 Hill Hall. Telephone: 766-4249. Email: [natsisja@wvstateu.edu](mailto:natsisja@wvstateu.edu).

**All contributions to the West Virginia State University International Program are tax deductible and will be used for international exchange and study abroad opportunities for our students. Please make your check payable to the WVSU R & D Corporation, P.O. Box 1000, Institute, WV 25112. Indicate that it is for International Studies.**

*Le Journal* is now available on-line. Visit our Website through the West Virginia State University weblink [www.wvstateu.edu](http://www.wvstateu.edu) (click on *General Info* and then *International Affairs*)

**Office of International Affairs Staff:**

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