



TIMOTHY REUTER '99, A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER WITH THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND MILITARY ENGINEERS ATTENDED THE OPENING CEREMONY FOR A U.S. FUNDED IRRIGATION PROJECT IN LAGHMAN, AFGHANISTAN.

## Laying the Groundwork

*Tim Reuter '99 was the first CISLA student to do his internship in the Middle East. In the summer of 1998 he interned in Jordan at the NGO, Search for Common Ground. When he recently responded to a CISLA questionnaire and I noted what he was doing, I could not help but reflect that his CISLA experience was the beginning of his career path. I have a vivid memory of Tim Reuter walking across campus, always with his head buried in The New York Times. He wrote the following from Afghanistan where he has been since November of 2007. — Mary Devins*

**I HAD BEEN LIVING** for six months in Afghanistan, embedded as a development adviser with the military on a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), when I suggested to the PRT Commander that we should get to know the religious students who were studying a few miles from where we lived. I thought it would be good to reach out directly to future opinion leaders who were likely to have strong doubts about whether our presence in Afghanistan is good or not. A few days later, we left our forward operating base in a convoy of armored Humvees and traveled down to a nearby *madrasa* to talk

to some of the students about why coalition forces were in their country and hear what their concerns were.

When we arrived at the school, the students, soldiers, and myself all sat in a circle on the floor. The students were in their early twenties and were very skeptical of our intentions. Their main concern was whether the international community was trying to change their religion and culture. One student noted since the overthrow of the Taliban and our arrival, there had begun to be soap operas on television that they deemed

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## director's column

**WHEN** Robert Gay and Mary Devins approached me a year ago to ask if I would serve as interim director while Robert took a much-deserved sabbatical leave, I did not hesitate long before agreeing. I had been looking forward to returning to the History department full time after spending a year in Rome and another in Durham, North Carolina as a fellow of the National Humanities Center, but I knew that Katie McCormack was leaving and did not want Mary to have to bring both a new internship coordinator and a new faculty director up to speed at the same time. Besides, directing CISLA would not take me out of the classroom as much as being Dean of International Studies did and the students I would get to know in CISLA would more than make up for those I would miss teaching in my own department. Still, I wondered if I would find the position as rewarding and as much fun as I had in years past.

I did. Meeting the returning members of the senior class, hearing about their adventures abroad, and tracking the progress of their integrative projects over the course of the year impressed me as much as ever. Seeing the large numbers of sophomores applying to the program, the promise of their proposals, and the quality of the class we took in convinced me that the certificate program is as appealing to students as it ever was. I enjoyed reading the final papers in IS 201 - *Perspectives on Modern Global Society*, in which the sophomores rethought their proposals in light of the CISLA questions and the course they had just completed, and the addenda to the senior integrative projects (SIPs), in which the seniors used the questions one last time to consider the meaning of the work they had done over the course of two and a half years. All of the papers confirmed my sense that the Center continues to attract the very best students and to nurture their thinking in fundamental ways.

Although I continue to pursue my research and teaching in Medieval European history, my interests in world history, and the fact that I was joined at the National Humanities Center by David Christian, the pre-eminent proponent of "Big History" (the story of the past that covers everything from the Big Bang to the present), led me to introduce a world historical component into IS 201 this year. We opened the semester with a reading and discussion of Christian's recent book, *This Fleeting World: A Short History of Humanity*, which covers its subject in under 100 pages! Next year, I will teach a section of IS 201 on the larger picture that Christian sketches in his magisterial *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History*. The point is to understand the history of humanity through the lens of the historical sciences, which reveal the physical constraints and possibilities of human development provided by the evolution of the world in which we live. For example, if we consider the fact that all living creatures need to extract energy from the environment, and those who do so most efficiently thrive, then we can organize human history according to eras dominated by hunting and foraging, agricultural production, and industrial technologies. In fall of 2010, I hope to introduce a new course into the College curriculum, modeled on IS 201. I will be joined by colleagues in the sciences, who will present three-week sections on the history of the universe, the planet, and life on Earth before I take on human history in the last three weeks of the semester. How's that for exploring the relevance of the past in understanding the present and the possibilities of the future?



Frederick Paxton

*Brigida Pacchiani Ardenghi Professor of History*

*2007-2008 Acting Director CISLA/Director Medieval Studies*

## Groundwork

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contrary to Islamic morals. Another student asked me whether it was true that in the United States there were books that argued against Islam.

In responding to their concerns I tried to emphasize that these issues about television and freedom of speech were internal Afghan debates, and our role in the country was simply to support the government as it tried to provide security and prosperity for the Afghan people. I was not sure whether my party line answer was entirely true. Their analysis of the current situation in Afghanistan was in many ways correct. There was a connection between our presence and the offensive soap operas on television. We wanted to create space for a freer media. We may think this a good change, but it would be foolish to dismiss the students concerns as simply ignorant or retrograde. Talking to them was certainly an education for me and I hoped I had done some good by coming and showing that a U.S. diplomat was interested in listening to their concerns.

Sitting on the ground with these students made me think back to my first experiences in the Muslim world when I was still an undergraduate at Connecticut College. Studying abroad in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, was part of my individualized CISLA program. I witnessed first hand a country of 200 million people disintegrating economically and politically as people threw off the yoke of dictatorship. The element of this turmoil that surprised me the most was that protest against the regime was often framed in religious language because the country's leadership had made it illegal to openly discuss the economic and political issues that were at the front of people's minds. When ongoing violence made it impossible to return to Indonesia for my CISLA summer internship, I decided to go to the Middle East to continue exploring issues of religion and politics. As part of my internship with Search for a Common Ground, I traveled around Jordan, the West Bank and Egypt, interviewing Islamists and Arab human rights workers about areas of common ground between Islam and



REUTER DISCUSSING THE PRESENCE OF COALITION FORCES WITH STUDENTS AT THE CENTRAL ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS SCHOOL IN MEHTAR LAM.

international human rights norms.

My experiences with CISLA launched me on a career focused on political and economic development in the Middle East. After earning a masters degree in international relations from Johns Hopkins University, I worked for the U.S. government on projects in Yemen, Israel and Iraq before joining the Foreign Service in 2007 and deploying to Afghanistan.

Having a liberal arts background gave me the confidence to address head-on with religious students in Afghanistan fundamental questions about the interaction between the U.S. and Muslim worlds. Whether the U.S. presence is perceived as an occupation or not by the

local populace is an important distinction. It is the difference between Afghans turning over to the police roadside bombs laid along the routes we travel or providing support to the insurgents. I hoped I was able to address the students' concerns in a way that demonstrated we were not in Afghanistan to try and alter their religion or culture. Reflecting back on my time at Connecticut College, I realize that the academic CISLA project I had taken on as a college junior had actually translated into skills that had real world security consequences for my team overseas. My hope is that I will make many more visits to the *madrasa* and through conversation and understanding I will have laid the groundwork to develop trust between us.

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## funding news

The CISLA program continues to receive generous financial support from friends, parents and alumni. A bequest from the estates of both Joyce and Donald O'Connor will be added to previous gifts and will be used to support the Joyce Todd O'Connor '68 CISLA Student Travel Scholarship Fund.

We are happy to announce an endowed CISLA internship in the name of Anita and John Fiorillo, parents of Alexandra Fiorillo '03.

Molly Hoyt Cashin '78 and her husband Stephen Cashin have given a generous gift to CISLA. Molly and Stephen have lived overseas for many years. Stephen is currently founder and chief executive officer of Pan Africa Capital Group. Molly visited the CISLA office and was very impressed with three CISLA seniors that she met, all of whom had completed internships in Africa.

# notes from the field

**THIS YEAR** we asked our interns from the class of 2009 to submit interim reports from their internships. The results were fascinating. CISLA scholars in 12 different countries from Moscow to Senegal often had the same comments and observations. We asked the students to describe the work place, the co-workers, the supervisor, their responsibilities, the challenges, difficulties, joys, and lessons learned. I have sent off almost 20 years of CISLA interns and know that the lessons and experiences from internships are profound and meaningful.

Although the CISLA scholars are there to fill in the experiential piece of an academic project, the reality is that by the end of the internship they have learned essential lessons about personal growth, independent living and life coping skills. Young people today are always connected to family and friends through technology and they are often unprepared to be on their own, make decisions and function without an imposed agenda or instant advice. Living an independent life away from familiar structures, peoples and support systems becomes an important aspect of the internship. In many organizations, the concept of an intern is something new and often misunderstood. Often our interns have to learn to be aggressively proactive to be given real work. Many told of how lonely they were at the beginning and how they were not prepared for the reality of daily life without the comfort and ease of campus life where friends are always just around the corner and each meal is a buffet of choices. This loneliness almost always turns into a positive experience as students learn to step out of their own comfort zone and discover new places and friends. Another common thread was the difficulty of living and working completely in a foreign language. Classroom and café vocabulary and conversation are not the language of the work place. Without good language skills one can feel stupid and left out. Our students quickly learn what it is to be the “other,” and with this, comes a new

respect for all those who find themselves foreigners in a foreign land. Many students mentioned that they actually had to learn to cook for themselves. You will see from the comments below that an internship is much more than a work/research experience. — *Mary Devins*

## A few examples

**Sarah Allen '09** is an international relations and Hispanic studies double major. Her senior integrative project (SIP) will be “The Effects of Ecotourism on the Environment and Economy of Costa Rica.” Sarah is in Costa Rica working for The Neotropica Foundation, an NGO whose mission is to facilitate a more sustainable balance between humans and nature. Her main duty is working an environmental educator for children. She goes to elementary schools and lectures on environmental themes. Sarah says, “My Spanish skills have greatly improved, as well as my people skills in general, since I have worked



SARAH ALLEN '09 WITH CHILDREN FROM A LOCAL SCHOOL IN COSTA RICA.

with and met a variety of people...The most challenging part has been living alone with very few other Americans or people my age. I have also been a bit pushier than I usually am, standing up for myself to get the experience I want.”

**Tianyi Xu '09** is an economics and Italian double major. Her SIP will be “Italian Perceptions of the Chinese and Chinese Culture.” She is in Milan, Italy working for the Fondazione Italia-Cina (Italy-China Foundation) whose mission is to facilitate the flow of people, ideas, capital and services between Italy and

China and improve the presence of Italy in China. Tianyi prepares presentations on Chinese investment; contacts Chinese newspapers, magazines and websites to seek collaboration with the foundation; and translates documents and correspondence. Tianyi says, “So far my Italian language skills, communication skills in the Italian work setting, research skills and presentation preparations have improved. Simply working with Italians everyday helps me a lot in getting a sense of the Italian perception of China... After two months of living alone, I believe that learning how to feed myself has been very rewarding. Having zero cooking experience, I frequently called my grandmother in China to ask for “recipes for dummies”...Sharing an apartment with two Italian girls, I had to learn to respect, understand and communicate with people with different personalities. I have learned to care about others.”

**Maddie Thompson '09** is a double major in Latin American studies and international relations. Maddie's SIP is titled, “Mexico's Porous Southern Border: Recent Immigration Waves, Political Controversy and the Search for National Security.” She is in Mexico City working for Sin Fronteras (Without Borders), a civic organization dedicated to the themes and issues of immigration, including direct services for immigrants and refugees, legal assistance, human rights advocacy, education, policy and programming, to name a few. She works directly for the Director of Research helping him research



MADDIE THOMPSON '09 WITH A GROUP OF UNDOCUMENTED HONDURAN AND SALVADORAN IMMIGRANTS IN “LA CASA DEL MIGRANTE” IN TAPACHULA, MEXICO.

the current migratory themes. She was able to go to the southern border of Mexico and Guatemala and work at the Guatemalan Consulate/Embassy where she had the opportunity to interview migrants. She says, “The most challenging aspect about being here on my own has been feeling too alone. Although we have all traveled before, the whole experience changes when you are the one to figure out your own plans rather than having a group leader or parent tell you what comes next. When I wake up I have no idea how my day is going to turn out, but I know that things will eventually turn out right. I have gotten a lot more patient and I have learned to come right out and ask for what I want; otherwise I would be missing out. I am so much more confident in myself. My Spanish has significantly improved.”

**Gili Ben-Yosef '09** is a sociology-based human relations major. Her SIP will be “Argentine-Jews Across Generations: Identity Formation and Maintenance as an Ethnic Minority.” She is in Buenos Aires, Argentina working at the Joint Distribution Committee, an international organization that aims to assist Jews everywhere, especially in places where their lives are difficult or being threatened. Gili works with the YOK program that was developed to create Jewish activities in Buenos Aires. Gili says her biggest challenge was at the beginning when they did not know what to do with an intern, and she had to explain to them what she would like to do and encourage them to find ways to use her. She says, “The biggest skill I have worked on is my Spanish. My boss told me yesterday that he has noticed a big improvement in my speaking. In addition, doing such intense research has given me a much greater understanding of sociology, my major. I feel that this research experience is a culmination of all that I have learned. One of the most important things in this experience and in life, is to be proactive. If you want something, go out and get it. I have learned to go and do many things alone here. I have stepped out of my comfort zone. At first I was nervous and unsure of myself, however my supervisor used the word “able” to describe me the other day. I was flattered, but looking back at what I have been able to do in the last

month, I am proud of myself. Every day I grow to appreciate CISLA more and more. It has taught me so much about the world and about myself.”

**Andras Molnar '09** is a Japanese language and literature major. Andras' SIP is titled “Education and Education Policy of the Korean Minority in Japan.” This summer he is working in Osaka with Hideki Nakazawa, a reporter for Kyoiku Jihosha, an educational news company. The digest is dedicated to distributing information about public and private schools in the Kansai area of Japan. His duties include translating interviews, writing articles and working on setting up an exchange program. Andras says, “I think the language barrier has been the largest hurdle I have had to get over. I am proficient in Japanese to the degree that I can live daily life



ANDRAS MOLNAR '09 IN A YUKATA, TRADITIONAL JAPANESE SUMMER DRESS, WORKING AT THE WORLD STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT IN KYOTO.

and have lively conversations, but my internship demands more. I have had to learn how to write in the Japanese newspaper format. Living alone in an apartment has opened my eyes to a whole new side of life. I now have to worry about all the household chores, and where on earth dinner is coming from after a full day at the office. I never realized how exhausting life could be. I am glad that I have had this experience, because I am now very appreciative of the Conn cafeteria. I have learned how to work through balancing a busy office schedule, personal time and also time with friends. I have learned how different all those experiences are and just how important all those experiences are.”

**David Urbaneja-Furelos '09**, an international student from Spain, is double majoring in international relations and East Asian studies. His SIP will be “The Europeanization of

Chinese Enterprises: the Rising Sino-European Entrepreneurial Relations.” This summer he is working for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization Investment and Technology Promotion (UNIPO-ITOP) office in Beijing and Taiyuan. David is the



DAVID URBANEJA-FURELOS '09 WORKING WITH THE “EU-CHINA SHANXI REGION PARTNERSHIP PROJECT” AT UNIDO ITPO-CHINA.

assistant on a project that is organizing “matchmaking meetings” with over 60 European enterprises and over 140 Chinese companies. Chinese is the working language of the office. David says, “My first challenge was to handle the responsibility of all communication with the European partners, my second challenge was being asked to prepare the Annual Report for the European Commission, and my third major challenge has been the language barrier. Everybody in the office talked to me as if I were a native speaker...I have acquired many Chinese business practices and manners. My internship is perfect preparation for my SIP...I have seen two realities of today's China. In Beijing I am in the midst of one of the most rapidly growing and changing cities on the planet...In Taiyuan everything is old style. My bed is a wooden table (without a mattress), I hand wash my clothes and cook in very old and very basic facilities. Through this I have learned how other people live in the world and how being optimistic is the most helpful tool for any situation. I have learned how being diplomatic can get you out of unpleasant circumstances. I know I am representing the UN and have to be polite and correct even with rude businessmen. Knowing Chinese etiquette has helped me gain the support and confidence of Chinese businessmen and government officials who usually regard foreigners as suspicious. I have learned how controlling stress is very important to continue doing a good job.”



THE CISLA CLASS OF 2010 IN FRONT OF THE UNITED NATIONS DURING OUR ANNUAL VISIT, THIS YEAR WE MET WITH DELEGATES FROM THE UNITED STATES, SPAIN AND RWANDA. IN PHOTO FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: EMMET MARKIN, FRED PAXTON, NYE SLEEPER, LILY PREER, JIM MACDONALD, GÖZDE ERDENIZ '08, JESSE DEUTSCH, MOLLY LAURIA, GORDON HALL, REBECCA LUKOWSKI, JACK LICHTEN, BIRCE SULTAN KARABEY, MAUREEN COSTELLO, SASHA GOLDMAN, JOHANNA GREGORY, ALEXANDER STADNYK, WILLIAM NICHOLS, JENNIFER GROSS, ASHTON ROHMER, KATIE SUGG, ERIN OSBORN, ROBIN MCGRATH, SAMANTHA HERNDON, SAMANTHA MCCRACKING, NAYAN POKHREL, PETER FRIEDRICH, LAKSHMI KANNAN, CHRISTINE LENIHAN, ANYA ROMANET, MERRILL D'AREZZO, ALEXANDRA FELFLE, MICHAEL GARDNER, DOROTHY WANG, ELIZABETH BAILY, KEVIN BERGIN AND LINDA CAMELIO. NOT SHOWN: ANDREW MARGENOT AND TYLER RAYMOND

## Welcome CISLA Class of 2010

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**A VERY WARM WELCOME** is extended to our newest CISLA class, made up of 14 men and 20 women. These scholars propose to travel to 18 different countries for their summer 2010 CISLA internships. They speak a variety of languages including Arabic, Mandarin, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish.

Their journey began spring semester in the gateway CISLA course, *IS 201 - Perspectives on Modern Global Society*, a special course designed to prepare CISLA scholars for their international experiences. This year the course was organized and taught by CISLA's Interim Director, Fred Paxton. He enlisted the participation of four faculty members from different departments: Robert Proctor from the department of Italian, who taught a section on the origins of the liberal arts; Jane Dawson from the department of government, who taught a section on global warming and international environmental treaties; Merrilee Mardon, from the department of economics, who discussed the impact

of globalization on the less developed world; and Gene Gallagher, from the department of religious studies, who discussed Islamic Fundamentalism as a reaction to globalization.

We wish each of the students from the CISLA Class of 2010 the best of luck in their studies abroad and pursuing and completing their internships in the exciting year to come!

### alumni recognition

At Reunion in May, ALEXANDRA FIORILLO '03, was awarded the Mach Arom '89 Young Alumni Award. This award honors an alumnus for service to Connecticut College and for distinguished achievements in his or her professional field or within society. Alexandra was honored for playing an active role on the Reunion Planning Committee as well as for serving as associate director of strategic ventures and alliances at ACCIÓN International, a microfinance organization working to end poverty.

Two CISLA alumni were awarded Fulbright Scholarships. SOREN GABRIELSEN '07, who graduated with a double major in German studies and philosophy, will teach English in Germany and plans to establish a club for students interested in learning about American folk and jazz music. ZACHARY WEST '05, who graduated with a double major in history and philosophy, will travel to Germany to teach English. He also plans to create an "American Film Society," at the school, using American films to teach students about the English language, as well as American history, politics and culture.

# LaShawn Jefferson '88 keynote speaker at Family Weekend

**CISLA TRADITIONALLY** invites the keynote speaker for Family Weekend. In 2007, LaShawn Jefferson '88, outgoing Executive Director of the Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, gave an important and timely talk titled: "Human Rights: Are They Really Universal?" Founded in 1978, Human Rights Watch is the largest U.S.-based human rights organization. It stands with victims and activists to prevent discrimination, uphold political freedom, protect people from inhumane conduct in wartime and bring offenders to justice.



Jefferson has conducted women's human rights investigations and undertaken advocacy on women's human rights in many countries, devoting special attention to the rights of women workers, violence against women in conflict, refugee women's rights, women's property rights, personal status codes,

and HIV/AIDS and women's rights.

Jefferson told the audience that human rights are under constant attack around the world, but are the essential tools necessary for advancement of social

activism. The most important issues in women's rights today stem from cultural practices and their confrontation with human rights. Even with these constant challenges, Jefferson feels that human rights are really universal, but that there must be recourse under the law, and that continued mobilization on the individual, local and state level is necessary. She said that the United Nations is

an effective player in the advancement of human rights. She feels that women must assume a leading role to advance their own rights and that the growing understanding of the power of human rights treaties offers hope in the face of staggering human rights abuses. It is her hope that future women's rights work becomes preventative, not responsive.

# Mellon Post Doctoral Grant

**IN THE FALL** of 2007 Connecticut College was awarded a significant and prestigious grant from the Mellon Foundation that would fund two-year postdoctoral fellowships for each of the five centers. CISLA has often lamented the lack of faculty and courses with expertise in Islamic studies and therefore proposed a position in this area of study. When the grant was awarded, we set up a search committee, drafted an ad and set out to find a recent Ph.D. who could critically appraise the relationship between tradition and modernity in Islamic societies, draw connections between various aspects of Islamic culture across the globe or illuminate interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim populations in an international setting. We were looking for applicants trained in interdisciplinary Middle East or Islamic studies, Arabic language and literature, journalism, anthropology, history or sociology. We conducted a search early in the spring semester, but the committee did not feel that we had an adequate pool of candidates and agreed to conduct a more comprehensive search beginning in the fall of 2008 in order to have the recipient begin with the Fall 2009 academic year.

In a separate but related initiative, this fall the College will offer an intensive class in beginning Arabic. In addition, there is currently a search committee that will seek someone to teach both intensive elementary and intermediate Arabic full time for a three-year visiting assistant professor position beginning in the fall of 2009. The responsibilities include service related to the development of an Arabic language curriculum, and the candidate will also work with current faculty to assess the possibilities of establishing a Middle Eastern and/or Islamic studies program at the College.

 For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.conncoll.edu/centers/cisla/6626.htm>

## upcoming

### Henry Luce Lecture Series

The Henry Luce Foundation was one of the early grantors to the CISLA program. The support and encouragement that they offered enabled the program to grow and thrive. CISLA decided to honor the late Henry R. Luce, the first president of the foundation, by creating a lecture series in his name. This year we have invited Ben Kiernan, the A. Whitney Griswold Professor of History, Professor of International and Area Studies and founding Director of the Cambodian Genocide Program and the Genocide Studies Program at Yale University. He is the editor of numerous books and articles on the topic of genocide. He will give a public lecture at the College on Sept. 29, 2008.

# A Guatemalan Summer

by Katie Conway '08, who majored in international relations, conducted her CISLA internship at *Trees, Water and People in Pinula, Guatemala*, and completed her senior integrative project, *"Green Politics in Latin America."*

Reprinted from The College Voice

## THE TOWN THAT I LIVED IN

all summer cannot be found on a map; believe me, before leaving for this mystery location, I tried. My understandably nervous parents tried as well, and much to their dismay they couldn't find it either. Even the most detailed of Guatemalan maps rarely lists it, for like all best kept secrets — Pinula is most easily found by those who already know where it is. From the outside, it is everything you would expect — a collection of inexpensively built and unimpressive structures, miles beyond even globalization's ubiquitous reach. I spent the summer learning how to construct wood burning stoves out of cinderblocks, cement and tin cans, not exactly cutting edge technology. Yet beneath the dirty and shabby exterior lives one of the most beautiful and successful communities I have ever had the privilege to be a part of. I also experienced how intimidating it was to find myself on the outskirts of a small, tight knit, homogeneous community, trying to find my way in. As the school year begins and I find myself back in the Connecticut College community, I wanted to share some of the lessons I learned in a community very far from here.

First and foremost, if you are headed for Pinula, you're going to want to pack light. Summer is the rainy season so everything you own may or may not get ruined in your house, where the difference between inside and outside is not as distinct as one could hope. You should also be ready to share what little you have or to leave people with

*recuerdos* or remembrances of the time you spent together. You may find yourself sharing your room with the baby chicks, neighborhood pigs, dogs, and even the occasional iguana (who will eat your souvenirs by the way). Ownership is relative. You may own that stereo, but when the school music class needs it, do not hesitate to hand it over. The rules of Pinula dictate that the greater the utility of your possession, the greater your



KATIE CONWAY BUILDING  
A STOVE IN A VILLAGE IN  
GUATEMALA.

responsibility to the community. This is especially the case if you happen to own a pick-up truck, the only type of vehicle that can brave the road to Pinula. If you are driving into town and pass someone walking, stop, ask them where they are going. If they are going your way or if you have time, take them where they need to go. As long as you have space in the back, you have a service to provide.

Furthermore, you are going to have to let your privacy barriers way down. Embarrassed about the effects all this debatably sanitary cuisine is having on your bowels? You are just going to have to get over it; there are no secrets when you use a communal outhouse. By noon

the entire town will have come over to make sure you are feeling better. Another fun effect of the lack of indoor plumbing will be showering while standing stark naked in front of the basin of water that occupies the main room of your three-room house. Do not be alarmed if on the first night, your host mother, who may be younger than you, comes in to discuss what types of food you like, while you stand naked dumping buckets of water

over your head. In this situation, there is nothing to do but press on, as your worst fear has already been realized. Don't be too upset either — this is just one of the many moments where all you will be able to do is laugh. As a newcomer here, all eyes are on you because, whether you like it or not, you are the most interesting thing to hit Pinula since last year's hurricane. But do not shy away from your new role as a cross between the new town celebrity and the village idiot due to your undeniably American looks and accent. Everyone here just wants to make sure that you are well cared for and loved, which brings me to my last point.

Finally, beyond all other lessons, I learned that the greatest thing you can do for someone who is a newcomer or different from the majority of your community is to be truly interested in them. Sure they may butcher their words and continually confuse the word for embarrassed with the word for pregnant, but ultimately they all want someone to care about how they are feeling, what they are thinking or to have just one person who asks how their day was. Even if your words don't quite translate, your interest in that person will. Maybe some of you understood these simple concepts already, and maybe it didn't take you a whole summer in a remote location to realize them. I just know that on behalf of the people who taught me how to be part of their community, I wanted to pass those lessons to those who might need them.

# A Guatemalan Summer: Through a CISLA parent's eyes

by Mary Conway P'08

Our daughter, Katie, has always wanted to live in faraway lands, but not merely to visit the tourist sights and move on. So of course Connecticut College, and especially the CISLA program, intrigued her. All that I understood was: “Gee Mom, Conn has this great international studies program!” I skimmed the CISLA Challenge and Mission Statement, thought how perfect it was for Katie, and read no further.

In Katie's sophomore year, her father and I were perplexed at the arduous application process, the extent of Katie's angst over it and whether or not she would be accepted. It was not until Katie was accepted and I ended up at the CISLA winter banquet that I realized we were not in Kansas anymore and probably never would be again! I sat in shock and amazement as the CISLA professors explained the extent of the program, the extra work involved, and especially as I heard of past exotic and unusual internships that certainly went “beyond the typical undergraduate experience” (a quote from the CISLA challenge.) I remember wondering how I would ever be able to explain all of this to my husband, Peter, who was unable to attend. In my head, analogies to the Land of Oz continued ... and I vaguely remember Mary Devins saying cheerfully that our children would have the privilege and challenge of planning and executing every little detail of their marvelous experiences. She assured us that CISLA would be there to help, of course, but that an important part of the whole process was learning to take individual responsibility for what the future would look like. I had visions of baby birds being pushed out of the nest.

I decided to stay out of it, and lo and behold my lovely baby bird pulled it off! Not without much hard work and internal struggle, but as Katie told me later, “Mom, CISLA expected an awful lot from us, but they never

questioned whether we would be able to do it.” She said that the very high expectations helped her through.

Katie is an international relations major with an interest in environmental issues. She worked hard to become proficient in Spanish and spent her semester abroad in Seville, Spain. She then designed her internship, keeping in mind her goal of complete immersion in a culture. She found a placement with a small NGO in Guatemala called Trees, Water and People. In the course of her summer internship she helped to build fuel-efficient cook stoves out of available materials, maintained a tree nursery to address deforestation in the area and conducted interviews in Spanish to collect feedback for the organization.

She got her wish for total immersion. She lived in a tiny rural village called Pinula, with a young couple and their baby. The mother, at 19, was two years younger than Katie. Villagers oversaw the project, so except for occasional visits from American field supervisors (and a wonderful visit from her dad!) she was the only foreigner. She coped with feeling lonely and a total lack of privacy. (Due to communal toilets the whole village knew when her intestines were upset and came to inquire about her health!) She pushed on, dealing with her loneliness by expressing her interest in getting to know the people of the village and allowing them to be interested in her. This included trying to explain many times why, at the old age of 22, she was not married with several babies. The older women were truly concerned for her about this. Katie and her young host mother, Claudia, spent a lot of time together, finding common ground in delighting in the baby girl's every move, smile and gurgle — it was new and miraculous for both of them. They became dear companions for each other. So Katie was well on her way to becoming the “global citizen who is culturally sensitive” just as hoped for in the CISLA mission statement. What I

had not expected was that her experience would also impact me in the same way.

Two weeks before she was to come home, Katie became seriously ill with dengue fever. Too sick to know how sick she was, and trying not to be a “bother,” she spent several days drifting in and out of delirium. There is no medication for dengue. Treatment consists of controlling the high fever and dehydration. Without close attention, dengue can be life-threatening. In a remote Guatemalan village, “two market towns over” from the nearest hospital, the villagers cared for the visitor in their midst in the same way that they take care of each other — they sprang into action. Claudia, her young “mother” became concerned and brought in the older women of the village, who correctly diagnosed her with dengue. They determined that she needed an immediate trip to the hospital. While someone was sent to fetch one of the village's few pick-up trucks and its owner, the older women set out to entertain Katie by telling tales of dengue fever, most with unhappy outcomes. Then they loaded her into the pick-up and the head matriarch of the village insisted on accompanying Katie on the long, bumpy, dusty trip.

At the hospital, which was frightfully less than sanitary by U.S. standards, all the right things were done for her. She was severely dehydrated with a 104-degree fever, so the staff put in an IV to rehydrate her and gave her medication to control the fever. They sent her home with extra medication and wanted to see her again in two days. The women cared for Katie at home, filled her with Gatorade, dispensed the meds on schedule, and again commandeered the village transportation resources to take her back for her follow-up visit. Claudia, in her effort to nurse Katie back to health, sacrificed the fat iguana that had been living in the house all summer (and eating into Katie's luggage). She made iguana soup, which is considered a great delicacy. Katie, in stalwart

*continued on page 11*

# News Perspectives

## THE RETURNING CISLA SENIORS

take a seminar called “New Perspectives on Modern Global Society.” As part of this they must complete a reflective internship report that discusses not merely what they did during the internship, but what they learned and how the experience impacted them personally. We have chosen three different reports to showcase in *Prism*. Because the reports are lengthy, we have included only the beginning of the report and urge the readers to follow the link to read them in their entirety.

**JYOTI PANDEY '08**, an international student from Nepal, was a double major in economics and international relations. Her senior integrative project (SIP) was titled “Helping War-Affected Children: Psychological Interventions by Non-government Organizations.” Last summer she interned for iEARN-Sierra Leone in Freetown, Sierra Leone. iEARN is a NGO aimed at connecting youth to the world through technology. It was founded in 1999 to address the need for rehabilitation of war-affected youth.



“I was still reading Ishmael Beah’s ‘Long Way Gone’ when I arrived in Freetown. In the book, Beah recounts, in vivid detail, his journey as a child

soldier during the civil war in Sierra Leone — a story of childhood lost amidst violence. At certain points, it feels surreal. How can you survive through so much? I have heard many stories, yet reading a book or watching a film has an element of detachment. Actually interacting with or spending time with people like Beah would certainly be a different experience, or would it? Would I actually meet many children who were really affected by the war? I did not know what to expect or how to prepare myself for what lay ahead.

Over the years iEARN has evolved to reach a wider youth audience. The center enables the children to learn IT skills, access the internet, and participate in a range of other activities such as music projects, photography, filmmaking and awareness workshops on subjects such as HIV/AIDS. My internship role was to work as a computer instructor teaching basic computer skills: MS Word, MS Excel and e-mail/internet. There were several other international interns: one was working on a photography project — teaching them how to take pictures to document their lives; another was attempting to translate “Julius Caesar” into Krio, the local dialect.

My research goal for my SIP was to learn about the impacts of war on children and the rehabilitation of those affected. My aim was to conduct participant observation as well as interviews for an ethnographic account.

The war left no one unscathed and the scars are visible everywhere — the amputees on the streets, the wreckage of burnt-out cars along the roadsides, bombed out buildings. However, when working at the iEARN centre you might think these children are fairly unaffected by the civil war. The war officially ended five years ago, and now most of the rehabilitation centers around the county have closed. Quite a few of the younger children that attended the centre were relatively unaware of or oblivious to the war. I was beginning to think that Sierra Leone is really in a post-war situation now.” ➔

**ADRIAN STOVER '08**, was a double major in French and music. He did his internship for La Fondation Èsprit de Fès (The “Spirit of Fez”



Foundation) in Fès, Morocco. His SIP was titled, “Globalization and the Modern International Music Festival.”

“The experience I had during my CISLA internship was the most difficult undertaking I have ever had in my life. I do not wish to convey in any sense that it was awful, and I do believe, with conviction, that it has been my greatest adventure to date. I realize that this is a strange sentiment, for why would anyone think that the most difficult period in one’s life would be the best? For me, this was the case when I lived and worked in Fès, Morocco. Learning to live in the oldest medieval city in the world, to work alongside many people with whom I could communicate only in French, and to function in a world that is unimaginable by most people in America was, to say the least, a challenge. The obstacles that I had to overcome included not knowing a lot of Arabic, finding housing, finding places to eat and buy food, getting sick and ending up in the hospital for two days, and understanding the rather complicated office politics that can exist when Arabs, Berbers, French, and one American are working together. However, I become enamoured with the journey, the challenge, and the fantastic realisation that I was really out there in Morocco. I saw things and did

things that I could not have possibly seen myself doing in the months before I arrived. My time there was a lesson in adversity, and the wonderful things that can happen when you overcome it.

For almost two and half months, I worked for La Fondation Éspirit de Fès, where I helped to organize the annual Fez Festival of World Sacred Music. In my search for an internship in Morocco, I was immensely attracted to this festival because of its origins and the message of tolerance that it continues to promote. In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, it was put together as a way of promoting understanding and peace between different cultures through music. From its first year in 1994, it has been held every year and has grown to an enormous, world-class event, attracting people from all over the world and headlining artists such as Ravi Shankar, Barbara Hendrix and Johnny Clegg. The festival itself is a very large event, and is organized into three parts. There are the main events at Bab Makina, a large courtyard of the Royal Palace that was used for outdoor events, the free outdoor concerts at Bab Boujloud, a large open square in the city, and the colloquium, which took place at the Batha Museum. It was in this place that intellectuals from across the world came to speak about globalisation and the arts, and where I spent most of my time working when the festival was in session.”

**DANNY KEISER '08** was an East Asian studies with a focus on Japan major. He interned at the American Chamber of Commerce in Tokyo, Japan and completed a SIP titled, “Bursting the Japanese Bubble: Exploring Lifestyles in Modern Tokyo.”

“A year ago, before I had boarded the plane that would eventually take me to Kyoto and my host Doshisha University for nine months, and even before arriving in Tokyo for the summer, I had never thought, not even for a moment, that I would begin my lengthy epic with the tale of a homeless experience.

The day that I stepped off a plane from a ten-day vacation in Shanghai, I briefly returned to Kyoto to retrieve my bags. Little did I know at the time that my bank had decided to freeze my account due to lack of notification



of travel outside of Japan. I purchased a one-way ticket a few hours later, bid farewell to the comforts of my Kyoto home, and boarded a non-stop bullet train to Tokyo. My actions were hastened due to the fact that my boss had called and asked me to be at work the following day, so that I could attend an important meeting with various Japanese bureaucrats. The Abe administration, which at the time had been undergoing a long series of horrendous scandals, had recently suffered the loss of the Minister of Agriculture. He had committed suicide after it was exposed that he had been stealing money and my boss wanted me there to document the Minister of Finance’s speech. When I arrived in Tokyo, with only thirty dollars in cash, I quickly entered a nightmare that would not end until a week later.

I won’t go through the trouble of explaining all the details, including my bank’s refusal to unblock my bank account for four days, but I will say that because of this I was unable to withdraw funds and accordingly I was refused access to my apartment. Inconveniently, due to low funds, I had to figure out how to survive in one of the most expensive cities in the world on only thirty dollars until my bank would clear my account (and who knew how long that would be), and I had work the next day. With no way to pay for a hostel, eat a meal and get to work the next day, I made the decision to sleep outside and shower the following morning in a nearby hostel where the baths were free. Despite begging and pleading with hostels, hotels, and my landlord, I was unable to convince them to allow me

to pay after checkout (I even showed my landlord my full bank account, which meant nothing to him).

To read the entire reports, please visit our website: <http://www.conncoll.edu/centers/cisla/>

## A Parent’s Perspective

*continued from page 10*

CISLA fashion, managed to swallow one spoonful before politely begging off. The neighbors came over with their bowls to join the feast, so it did not go to waste. This is where my snobbery about the superiority of western medical care took a beating. Instead I received a humbling but wonderful lesson in the power of people caring for each other.

Our “experts” back in the U.S., the grandmothers and our doctors all agreed that Katie should come home. The dengue would run its course over at least another week, and she was too weak to work. Katie resisted coming home, worried that leaving early would jeopardize her CISLA standing, but of course the CISLA staff wonderfully understood. So she agreed to come home, sad to leave her newfound community, especially Claudia and the baby and the people she had worked with. Once again, a villager borrowed a truck, got up at 4 a.m. and drove Katie the two hours to Guatemala City to catch her plane.

As I have researched dengue and watched Katie struggle with the aftermath, I am increasingly grateful to the people who took such wonderful care of our child. Whatever the cultural differences, they truly stood in for us as parents. If she had been at home, she would have had the comfort of her own bed and air-conditioning, but we could not have done much more than they did.

Of course, for this article, I had to ask Katie the inevitable question: “If you knew in advance that you would get dengue, would you have chosen to go anyway?” And she replied, “Absolutely.” Somehow I knew that would be her answer.

She recovered in time for fall semester, and managed a full course load, despite residual mono-like symptoms.

# CISLA Student Travel Grants

by Mary Devins



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: SARAH VAN HOOGENSTYN '08, AYAKO MEGURO '08, MILES RYAN '08, BARBARA SNOW DELANEY '44 AND DASHA LAVRENNIKOV '08

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## THROUGH THE GENEROSITY

of several donors, CISLA now has an endowed fund that enables us to solicit proposals from qualified seniors for one of the following purposes: to return to the site of their internships to continue research and effectively complete their senior integrative project (SIP); to attend a domestic or international conference related to their research; or to travel to a site where they can access primary material related to their SIP. This year we were fortunate to fund four students.

Sarah VanHooenstyn '08 majored in sociology. She worked in Madrid for Asociación Nacional Presencia Gitana, an organization that was concerned with rights of gypsies. Her SIP was titled, "Discrimination and Gypsy Culture in Spain." Sarah felt that she needed additional primary sources to complete a comprehensive project. In January she was able to go to Granada where there is a large gypsy population as well as organizations specifically concerned with discrimination and rights of gypsies. She contacted the Centro Sociocultural Gitanos Andaluz and they welcomed her and invited her to use their library and introduced her to some of the smaller NGOs where

she was able to meet and interview the staff members. She was able to directly examine housing and work environments as well as talk to non-Gitanos about their view of this marginalized group.

Ayako Meguro '08 graduated as a double major in international relations and East Asian studies. For her CISLA internship she worked at the Yunnan Institute of Development, in Yuxi, China. Her SIP was titled "Chinese Policies Aimed at Ethnic Minorities." During her internship she worked with the volunteers to promote education in the rural villages where they helped people organize to fight poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease. Upon her return in January she went to another area in Yunnan where she wanted to look more closely at the AIDS and malaria projects in the region. The population lives in remote areas and is not literate. This presents enormous challenges for AIDS education. Ayako was able to gather additional important information for her SIP.

Miles Ryan '08 graduated as a double major in environmental studies and Italian. The summer of his junior year he interned in Rome at the Sezione dell'International Solar Energy Society

Italia. His SIP was on the "Challenges to the Success of Photovoltaic Energy in Italy." During the internship he was able to access information about the government and public sector, but was missing the private sector. His trip over winter break gave him the opportunity to meet with individuals and conduct interviews that would give him the necessary information to complete a thoughtful and informed SIP.

Dasha Lavrennikov '08 graduated with double major in dance and international relations and a minor in Slavic studies. In January she returned to Cusco, Peru where she had interned at the NGO, La Casa de los Hombres Del Sol, an organization that works to help children suffering from poverty, neglect and child labor. Her SIP was on "The Political Economy of Street Children and Child Labor in Peru." In Peru she continued her research, reconnected with the children, brought them warm clothing and art supplies, visited a shelter, and met the coordinator for children's rights in Cusco. Her trip allowed her to gather important research data and make strong connections with the activist community.

# CISLA alumni news

After soliciting alumni updates via e-mail I was thrilled to hear from so many of our CISLA alumni. Thank you to all who extended a warm welcome to me as the new internship coordinator of the CISLA family! I am very proud to be part of CISLA, and our CISLA alumni are living examples of the ongoing success of CISLA. To submit alumni updates please send your news and pictures to me at: [dwangl@conncoll.edu](mailto:dwangl@conncoll.edu) and I will share your updates in our next *Prism*. — *Dorothy Wang*

## 1992

**Claudia Krugovoy** was in the first group of CISLA students, graduating with a degree in Modern European Studies and a minor in German. She reports that since then, except for her own personal travels, her work life has kept her stateside. She received a master's degree in social work and is currently in



psychoanalytic training at the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center, PPSC, in New York City. She has a full-time psychotherapy practice in Manhattan, and works with patients seeking help for

a range of problems. She and her husband now live in New York after their wedding on Block Island, R.I. on Sept. 29, 2007.

## 1993

**Alexis Audette** lives in New York City with her husband, Sanjiv Rao, and their two-year-old daughter, Paloma. She is the design director of Beacon Hill, the luxury brand of a large textile house called Robert Allen. Her team creates a broad range of products, including a growing category of eco-friendly textiles. She recalls taking art classes at Connecticut College, and later earning her M.F.A. at RISD, and how she never imagined that her career would have a particularly international focus. Now she works with textile mills from all over the world and travels abroad frequently to trade shows. Combining design and business in an international context has made her appreciate the interdisciplinary

nature of CISLA in new ways.

**Laura Manzano** opened a NYC office for Auberge Resorts in January 2006. She traveled to Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand in 2007.

## 1994

Currently **Jason Sprong** is the General Manager for Melissa and Doug, an educational toy company. He lives in Hong Kong and works in Shenzhen, China. Prior to that he was the managing director-Asia for the Lenox Group Inc. His wife Mariam, and two children: Mia Jane Sprong who is two years old, and Jake Newlove Sprong who is 10 months old, all live very happily in Hong Kong. Recently they held a fundraiser



to collect donations for the earthquake victims in Sichuan province of China.

## 1995

**Heidi (Szycher) Grasbon** and her family have adjusted quite well to living in Madison, N.J., since moving in November 2006, after living in Germany for 10 years. Their biggest, latest news is the birth of their daughter, Lilian Rose, on July 11, 2007. Lilian is their



only U.S.-born child who could actually be a U.S. president. The other children, Janina Leila, Amelie Maret, and Dominic Mohr, were all born in Germany.

Heidi continues to be a stay-at-home mom, and enjoys being with the children, while still avidly running.

**Aaron Maines** is an American freelance writer based in Milan, Italy. He works for newspapers and magazines on both sides of the Atlantic and is a regular contributor to international magazines *Cartier Art* and *Verve*, regularly putting to use his English and Italian writing skills. As a translator, he has worked with some of the most important Italian writers of the past century, including Umberto Eco and Oriana Fallaci. His Italian food and wine column, "Foodbox," appears monthly in *The American* magazine. He reports his recent article, "Italy's Ancient Vines: In Valle d'Aosta, researchers are rescuing rare varieties from extinction,"

made the cover story in July 5, 2008 of the *Wall Street Journal's* weekend section.

**Darcy Nothnagle** completed a graduate degree in contemporary European politics a few years back and had a wonderful time living in the U.K. while doing so. She is now back in the U.S. working as deputy district director for Congressman McDermott (D-WA). Last year her family had a new addition, a baby boy, who joins his five-year-old sister.

**Rebecca Shapiro** is married and lives in NYC with her husband Peter, a film and music producer, and their two-year-old daughter Roxy. She is the director of publicity at Shore Fire Media, a boutique entertainment public relations and online marketing firm in Brooklyn. She keeps in close contact with CISLA alum Martha Maher Sharp, Maria Esguerra, Carole Clew Elms and Casey Benjamin — they often get together for play dates!

**Amy Malkin Snyder** is currently living in Atlanta, with her husband and two daughters, Abby who is three and a half, and Maddie, who is seven months. She has been working as a marketing consultant, doing work with Coke, Georgia-Pacific and UPS, helping them to manage and grow their consumer brands through product development, retail and communications/advertising strategies. Her CISLA background and language skills have helped her in evaluating and targeting Hispanic market segments for brand growth for several clients. She loves living in the South with her family, enjoying the great weather and the ability to play tennis outdoors year-round!

## 1996

**Chelsea BaileyShea** is living in Rochester, N.Y., with her two children and husband, a fellow Camel. She is finishing a Ph.D. in educational policy and theory and was recently awarded a dissertation fellowship from CIEE to pursue her dissertation research on factors that affect participation in study abroad.

**Gayle Baker Cramer** reports a lot of developments in her family this year. She and her husband, Jim, are in between Foreign Commercial Service posts in São Paulo and Tel Aviv. She works as a contractor for the Brain Injury Center for soldiers returning from the war, and for Pact, Inc., and volunteering with a Brazilian orphanage. In March, their daughter, Baker, was born.

**Sarah Hennigan Ostergaard** and her family moved to Asheville, N.C. last summer and spend their "free" time on their farm with cattle, ducks, chickens, bees, and soon sheep. They are focusing on heritage breeds because they want to help preserve these important breeds and because it is better for our nation's

food supply! She has three children: Jack, age six, William, age four, and Katie, almost two.

**Zandy Mangold** is a freelance photographer and writer based in NYC.

**Keri Sarajian** and Rick Stratton are the proud parents of Beckett Asador Stratton, who turned 1 on Feb. 8. They live in Milwaukee and Keri works with SC Johnson.

**Sara Schaefer (Munoz)** has recently taken a job with *The Wall Street Journal* in London, UK, covering banks and international finance. She has relocated with her husband Juan Felipe and their four-year-old daughter, Sofia.

**Gwen Fairweather Varady** and Eric welcomed son Windsor Ian on April 14, 2007. The Varadys live in Newtown, Pennsylvania, and Gwen is an associate director at Bristol Myers Squibb in New Jersey.

## 1997

**Sarah Schoellkopf** just earned a Ph.D. in Hispanic languages and literatures from the University of California, Berkeley. She is not



sure where she will be working in 2009, but the rest of 2008 will be filled with filing the dissertation, travel to Dubai, Europe, and Argentina, and relaxation!

**Anna Snider** is

currently living in New York among great friends and is a director and senior research analyst at Bank of America Alternative Investments. During the past couple of years, she has been involved on a volunteer basis with microfinance and recently got offered a great opportunity to work with the Grameen Foundation on a new volunteer program that they are launching, which involves training financial professionals to advise microfinance institutions in developing countries.

## 1998

Ten years after graduating from Connecticut College and CISLA, **Jonah Davis** currently works for a truly global company, Bloomberg LP. He is the lead producer for their midday television program, which is seen on Bloomberg stations all over the world, in Asia, Europe and Latin America.

After living in Japan for three years working as a translator for the Japanese government, **Darren Srebnick** came back to the U.S.

After a three-year stint in a Japanese-owned import/export logistics firm in Nashville, Tenn., working as a U.S. Customs broker, Nissan North America headquarters hired

him, as a U.S. Customs analyst specializing in international taxation related to the import of products for Nissan and development of information systems to facilitate trade. His Japanese skills are coming in handy especially with e-mail correspondence and conference calls. On the side he is volunteering with the UN Refugee council to assist an Iranian family who sought asylum in the U.S.

**Sam Vanderlip** and Julia Dobrokhotova celebrated the arrival of daughter, Ekaterina (Katya), on Nov. 23, 2007 at 8:25 a.m. Moscow time.

## 1999

**Kelly (Gardner) Christensen** of Vail, Col., married Jonathan Christensen on July 19, 2008. They are moving to Montevideo, Uruguay in September where Kelly will be working as an English Language Fellow.

**Timothy Reuter** is working as a Foreign Service Officer with the United States Agency for International Development on a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan. He serves as one of three civilians on a team of about 80 military personnel in rural Afghanistan where he assists in the programming of civilian development assistance for a province and serves as an adviser on development issues for the military. He currently lives in Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan. (See article on page one)

**Catie Ryan** originally from Oldwick, N.J., reports that after finishing Peace Corps in Thailand, she went on to get an M.A. in sustainable international development from Brandeis University. She conducted her research on urban watershed sustainability in Mexico. She just graduated and is now working in NYC at a green infrastructure think tank and consulting firm.

**Yoko Shimada** is now with the Clinton Foundation. Since January 2008, she and Collin are living in London. She still travels like a mad woman but finds it nice that Collin has been stable in London so that she has a home to come back to!

**Doreen Vaillancourt Maroney** and **Hagen Maroney '98**, are in-between tours with the U.S. Foreign Service. They left the Dominican Republic in June 2008 and after a year of training in Washington, D.C. will spend three years in Riga, Latvia. Their son and future CISLA student Sidney is now 18 months old and keeping mom and dad on their toes.

## 2000

**Thomas Garrison** lives with his wife in Providence, R.I., working as a postdoctoral research fellow in archaeology and anthropology and as a junior faculty member

at Brown University. He enjoys teaching undergrads and conducting archaeological research. He recalls CISLA gave him his first field opportunity on his way to becoming a professional archaeologist, and he uses his CISLA language constantly during field research in Guatemala and Mexico.

**Joseph Rioff** just graduated from University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and will move to NYC to begin a job as an associate at a boutique investment bank. Prior to business school he spent six years in the consulting industry, based in both Montreal and Boston.

## 2001

**Peter Kroll** is now living in Fairbanks, Alaska, after being accepted into the University of Alaska School of Economics. He got married in July 2007 and while he has not done any international travel since college, he hopes to get back on the wagon soon.

**Adam Larkey** is still living in L.A. and working as a still photographer for ABC/Disney. Recent highlights were work trips to Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados and Chile! He can't wait to go back.

**Varun Swamy** reports that he recently terminated a long-term relationship with a lady with the initials Ph.D. on good terms, the settlement mediated by his doctoral dissertation committee allowed him to retain her initials. He is now a postdoctoral associate at the Center for Tropical Conservation at Duke University in Durham, N.C. Over the next three years, he plans to continue doing



field research on tropical rainforest ecology in the Amazon headwaters region of southeastern Peru, dividing his time between N.C. and Peru. He was just in Suriname for the annual tropical

ecology conference, which he has attended in Panama, Brazil and Mexico over the past five years. He reported this update from the Lima airport, just before beginning a three-day journey back to the rainforest field station in the heart of Manu National Park, where he will be based until November.

## 2002

This past summer, **Laurel Dudley** was a team member on the inaugural Blue Planet Run relay RUN around the world in 95 days to raise awareness for the global water crisis. ([www.blueplanetrun.org](http://www.blueplanetrun.org)). She now gears up to present on the Blue Planet Run Foundation at a conference in Bali, Indonesia



in November. After a short stint managing an eco-tourism company upon her return from the run, she is now in a transitioning phase and consulting with the East West Center as Orientation Coordinator for new East West Center students, in addition to working on corporate team-building events with Adventure Race Hawaii. She also finds time to mountain bike the north shore, run, and swim in clear blue Hawaiian water on the side of course!

**Eunice Kua** lives in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, just after spending a year doing a graduate diploma in linguistics in Australia. She is in the process of joining a team to do literacy work among Darfur refugees in eastern Chad next year, if the security situation permits.

**Wilbert Quintanilla** was a guest speaker at our CISLA Fall Banquet this past year. He is currently working at the Latin American Youth Center in Washington D.C.

## 2003

During Reunion this year, the Mach Arom '89 Award was presented to **Alexandra Fiorillo**. The award honors alumni who have graduated within the past 15 years for service to Connecticut College and for distinguished professional achievements. Fiorillo has played an active role on the



5th Reunion Planning Committee in addition to serving as the associate director of strategic ventures and alliances at ACCIÓN International, a microfinance organization working to end poverty.

## 2004

Ever since studying abroad **Katie Coffin** has not been able to sit still! She made sure she found a job with generous vacation time plus business travel opportunities. As director of admissions for EF International Language Schools she coordinates short and long-term study abroad programs for American teens throughout the year and across the globe. From Berlin to the Dominican Republic, and from San Clemente to Chicago, EF has certainly added some boarding passes to her scrapbook. In October 2007 she attended an EF worldwide sales kickoff meeting in Cape Town, South Africa.

She asks that if anyone has collaborative marketing ideas for EF's schools, please contact her at: [Katie.Coffin@ef.com](mailto:Katie.Coffin@ef.com).

**Andrea Jones-Rooy**, originally from Frederick, Md., reports that she is now a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the University of Michigan and is researching the sources and consequences of countries' capacities to adapt to changing circumstances. This summer she is also a teaching assistant for the Joseph Stiglitz Advanced Graduate Workshop on Poverty, Development, and Economics in Manchester, U.K.

## 2005

**Heather DeDecko** recently found out unofficially that she has been accepted into Croatia's M.A. program for General Croatian Studies and Literature. After much anticipation she has achieved her goals and will not have to go through the committee for international acceptance again. This will make her the first American ever at that school!

## 2006

**Nicole Adams** lives in Colchester, Conn. and has been engaged to her fiancé, Eric, for a little over a year. They look forward to getting married in New Hampshire in the summer of 2009. In February she began working as a Business Analyst for United Health Group in Hartford. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Community Coalition for Children in New London, which has a strong partnership with Connecticut College OVCS.

**Allyson Borgelt** is living in Fircest, Wa., working at World Forum Foundation in Seattle as an international customer services specialist. The World Forum Foundation promotes a global exchange of ideas on the delivery of quality services for young children. She helps coordinate international conferences, uniting early childhood advocates around the world.

**Liz Hubley** is currently working part-time in Costa Rica coordinating eco-tourism groups near where she did her CISLA internship and part-time in El Salvador with groups of high school and college students doing community service projects in rural communities. Next year, the organization she works with in El Salvador, CoCoDA ([www.cocoda.org](http://www.cocoda.org)), is planning to work with CIS (Center for Exchange and Solidarity in El Salvador) to bring a group of U.S. citizens to act as Election Observers. She immediately thought of CC and CISLA students and what a great opportunity it would be to do a school-sponsored trip or project. She would love to hear of any interest and encourages anyone who wants

to help make it a reality to contact her.

**Kate McDowell** is living in East Rutherford, N.J. and working at BayernLB, as the head of agency services for Loan Syndications. Her company works very closely with Project Finance, which invests mostly in Wind Deals.

# CISLA Alumni Networking

## CISLA COMES TO FACEBOOK!

**Collin Keeney '98** has volunteered to manage and get a new CISLA Facebook site up and going. We would like to have a "champion," or volunteer class representative, to help us find everyone from that class so that we can have full participation by class year. To volunteer as your class champion, please e-mail Mary Devins at: [msdev@conncoll.edu](mailto:msdev@conncoll.edu). Join the CISLA Alumni Facebook group at: <http://www.facebook.com/n/?group.php&gid=28121915967>, created to help alumni keep in touch, network and otherwise keep track of fellow CISLA-ers wherever they may roam. CISLA alumni are globetrotters, trendsetters and have uniquely international careers. The Facebook group will be a great resource for those trying to get the local scoop on a place they are visiting, seeking employment, reconnecting with classmates, sharing ideas, finding acquaintances or simply staying abreast of the happenings at CISLA. Please join the CISLA Group on Facebook and include your class year. A Facebook account is free and easy to register for at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

**Alexandra Fiorillo '03** and her parents, John and Anita Fiorillo have started a U.S.-based non-profit called "Pockets of Change" (POC). The mission is to alleviate poverty and support sustainable growth by bundling moderate donations from individual donors who agree to create "pockets of change" in poor communities. POC invites CISLA alumni and/or their families to submit proposals for small grants (\$1,000 - \$5,000) to support local, grassroots economic development activities in Africa or Latin America. Please e-mail [pocketsofchange@gmail.com](mailto:pocketsofchange@gmail.com) for more information to either donate or submit a proposal.

# day-to-day: student advisory board

## THE STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

(SAB) has evolved into a strong and proactive arm of CISLA. It is comprised of sophomores, juniors and seniors. Aside from helping with recruiting, organizing social events and collaborating with the staff and faculty of CISLA, the SAB has taken a leadership role in fundraising initiatives.

During Fall Weekend the SAB sold cards made from photos taken by CISLA students during their internships. The proceeds of \$400 from the sales were given to Dasha Lavrennikov, to contribute to the NGO, The House of the People of the Sun, in Cusco Peru, where she had completed her internship during the summer of 2007. Later during the fall of 2007, CISLA helped Dasha

collect donations of warm clothes from the College community to bring to the children in Cusco when Dasha returned over winter break.

The students sponsored an International Dinner and a Movie. The profits were given to Ayako Meguro and she used them to finance trips to the hospital for needed medical care for some of the children from the rural village where she had had her internship.

This spring semester, CISLA held an International Photo Contest. Open to students, faculty and staff, we received a wide range of participation and submissions, with a total of 189 photos of people, places and things all from international locations around the world. Following consultation of a professional in the field, we awarded a

total of 11 prizes. The winning photos were announced, printed and mounted on foam core to be displayed in the Shain Library and outside the CISLA office in the first floor of Fanning Hall, for all to enjoy. Next year we plan to make our annual fundraising Fall Weekend cards from the images collected from this photo contest.

We have decided that each year CISLA should have a fundraiser that will be organized by the senior class and the SAB. The proceeds will go to an organization of the students' choice. This year on May 2 the students put on a very impressive evening called "Spotlight on Human Rights." They brought in Connecticut College music groups, singers and speakers. They were able to raise \$800, which will be donated to Heifer International.

