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International Focus

Cypress College



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Greetings from the International Students Program! The 2015-2016 year has been another busy academic year for international students at Cypress College.

This edition of *International Focus* will feature various accomplishments of ISP students, interviews with ISP Ambassadors and an alumna, as well as event and activity highlights of the International Club. The newsletter was a collaborative, year-end project for the ISP Ambassadors (see back cover) who contributed with articles and interview, and Billy Joe (see p. 10) put it all together!

Welcome to the 2015-2016 edition of *International Focus* from the International Students Program at Cypress College!



Cypress College
**International
Students Program**

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www.cypresscollege.edu

Meet the ISP Staff

Yongmi Han, Manager



Before coming to Cypress College in the fall of 2005, I worked at two different English language schools from 2000-2005. Prior to that, I spent almost 5 years teaching and living in Seoul, Korea, where I became interested in working with foreign or international students.

My educational background is in biology and art history, but I enjoy working with international students here at Cypress, assisting them with their pursuit of higher education in the United States, and witnessing their successes in transferring to universities or obtaining their degrees here to enrich their professional careers back home.

In addition to overseeing the college's International Students Program, I am also involved in the campus Diversity Committee and Student Services Council. Each spring, I work with the Associated Students and student services areas in planning the World Fest & Diversity Fair, and each fall, I assist in planning the New Student Welcome Night.

Gina Marrocco, Administrative Assistant II

I attended Cypress High School and then came to Cypress College. My major was Business Administration. I worked part-time in the Business Building Computer Lab. My word processing teacher was responsible for the computer lab. I enjoyed keeping in contact with my word processing teacher and my academic counselor after graduating.

While attending college, I also worked as an Administrative Assistant at Knott's Berry Farm. I worked at Knott's for 17 years before coming to Cypress College in 2001. I was hired for the Administrative Assistant position in the Center for Intercultural Understanding. Our office was responsible for the Study Abroad Program, Diversity Committee and assisted with the international student orientation. This position progressed into my current position as Administrative Assistant II for the International Students Program. We had 35 international students at that time. It has been exciting to see the program grow and meet so many wonderful students from all over the world! I continue to serve as the administrative support for the Diversity Committee. In addition, I am an advisor for the International Club and a member of the Kindercaminata.



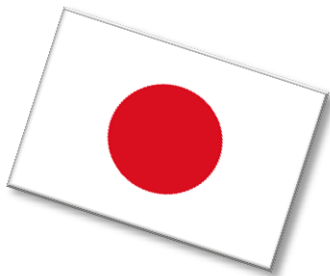
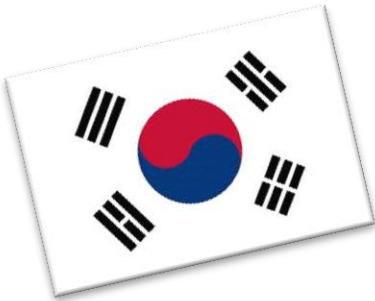
Renay Laguaña-Ferinac, Counselor



My favorite part of my job is career counseling. Each person has a special story and a unique path. My life outside of work is tremendously blessed and busy with fun activities! Married to my sweet husband, John for 16 years, we enjoy special weekends, just the two of us, in addition to weekends with our two wonderful children, Bella (15) and Noah (13) camping, time with cousins, sports, and cultural events. My favorite pastimes: dancing, listening to live music, cooking, flowers and time with family and friends.

One of my favorite poems: We cannot choose how many years we will live, but we can choose how much life those years will have. We cannot control the beauty of our face, but we can control the expression on it. We cannot control life's difficult moments, but we can choose to make life less difficult. We cannot control the negative atmosphere of the world, but we can control the atmosphere of our minds. Too often we try to choose and control things we cannot. Too seldom we choose to control what we can...our attitude. — John Maxwell

ISP Countries



	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Argentina		1
Brazil	1	1
Burundi	1	1
Cambodia	2	2
Canada		1
China	4	4
Congo	2	2
Ethiopia	1	1
Finland	1	1
France	2	2
Germany	1	2
Hong Kong	2	1
Indonesia	2	1
Japan	5	6
Jordan	4	4
Korea	59	55
Myanmar	1	4
Nepal		1
Palestine		1
Philippines	1	2
Romania	1	1
Saudi Arabia		1
Singapore		1
Spain		1
Sri Lanka	1	1
Sweden	3	2
Thailand	1	2
United Kingdom	1	1
Venezuela	1	1
Vietnam	59	71
Total	156	175

ISP Ambassadors



“It is my honor to be a representative of the Cypress College International Student community and a student ambassador for Cypress' International Students Program! My name is Thy and I am currently a Physics major at Cypress. I love playing music, visiting museums, reading British literature and meeting new people”

- Thy Le
Vietnam

“I'm from Cambodia. I've been here at Cypress College since Fall 2014. I love the environment, great professors, and classmates from diverse cultures. My writing skill has improved since I took ESL classes here. Currently I'm a Financial Accounting SI Leader at Cypress College and I'm transferring to UC Irvine.”

- Kim Hour Peuv
Cambodia



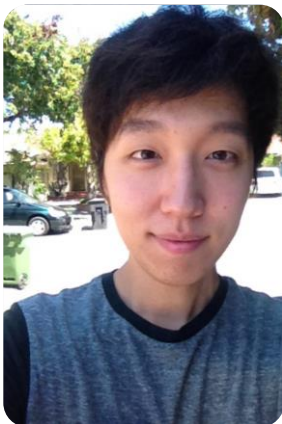
“International Students Program has been an opportunity door for me to feel at home upon coming here. With no friends and familiar faces, ISP served as my first connection in America during my first year here. I was able to meet fellow international students who were experiencing the same struggles of adjusting to this new environment. I chose to become an ISP Ambassador with the hope of helping the freshmen feel the same thrill that I felt with the help of this program!”

- Su Bin Lee
South Korea



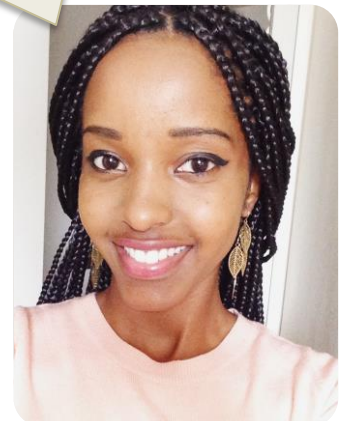
“I have been studying at Cypress College since Spring 2014 and I am still amazed at the beauty of the campus. Being part of the International Students Program is a major life changer. It will give you more than knowledge about the United States and its language and culture. In fact, it will teach you about building friendships, being responsible for yourself, respecting differences and beliefs of others.”

- Cynthia Habonimana
Burundi



“I became an ISP ambassador because I still remember feeling lost and scared when I first came to the United States. I came from a different continent and had no friends or family here, but I was able to survive and have a great first year experience with the help of many people! I want every student coming from different places to have a great time in the new environment and feel welcomed.”

- Donggun Lee
South Korea



Meet Our Students from Asia



Thy Le, one of our ISP Ambassadors, interviewed a few students from Asian countries during their first semester at Cypress College. They shared their experiences and advice for prospective international students:

Let's start with some introductions.

Madi: My name is **Madi**, I am 18 years old and I am from Myanmar. My sister here is **Thada**, also 18 years old and from Myanmar. We are both Computer Information Systems majors.

Dung: Hi! My name is **Dung**. I am 19, from Vietnam and I am currently a Business major.

Great! What do you like the most about Cypress College?

Thada: I love our library! It is such a helpful place for students because it literally has everything that you need to succeed in your classes. There's the English Success Center where you can get help with English and ESL; there's the Math center where you can practice your math skills with their DLA worksheets or seek help from a tutor there if you are stuck on a problem.

I also really like our professors here at Cypress; they can explain topics very well and are always very helpful.

Wonderful! However, coming to America and going to a school that is completely new, there must have been quite a few challenges for you. Would you like to share some of your challenges?

Madi: Getting around was a lot more difficult than we expected because in our home country, the public transportation is usually very good and can get you anywhere you want, but here in America you have to have a car to do that.

Another challenge that I encountered was the differences between the culture which I grew up in and the American culture here. I did experience culture shock for a while, and I was very homesick. But luckily, I made new friends very soon after I started going to class and the activities that the International Students Program organizes here on campus.

Would you mind sharing what you future academic plans are?

Thada: Since I am a CIS major, I am planning on

opening a start-up in Myanmar once I finish my studies in the US. I would like my start-up business to focus on protecting personal information in Myanmar because right now, personal information can be stolen very easily in my home country.

Finally, do you have any advice for a prospective international student coming to Cypress College?

Dung: My advice would be to practice your English while you're home, as much as you can, and prepare yourself for some culture shock and homesickness.

Thank you all so much for your time, Madi, Thada and Dung!

- Article by: Thy Le



Transfers to 4-Year Universities 2014-2015

Last Name	First I.	Country	University Name	Major
Bui	B.	France	CSUF	Business
Cho	H.	Korea	CSULA	Nursing
Choe	M.	Korea	Otis	Architecture
Dang	V.	Vietnam	CSULB	Marketing
Huynh	T.	Vietnam	CSUF	Business
Ishida	M.	Japan	UCB	Sociology
Jung	Y.	Korea	UC Davis	Chemistry
Kang	J.	Korea	CSULB	Biology
Ly	P.	Vietnam	CSUF	Business Admin.
Ngo	T.	Vietnam	CSUF	Mech-Engineering
Nguyen	L.	Vietnam	CSULB	Biochemistry
Nguyen	N.	Vietnam	Cal Poly Pomona	Hospitality
Nguyen	T.	Vietnam	Chapman	Business
Ortega	A.	Spain	UCI	Psychology
Pan	A.	Malaysia	CSULB	Computer Science
Park	J.	Korea	UCSD	Economics
Siraj	O.	Eritrea	CSULB	Sociology
Tran	N.	Vietnam	University of Minnesota	Chem. Engineering
Tran	T.	Vietnam	CSULB	Business



Interview with an ISP Alumna:

Ferlyn Saputri



Where are you from and why did you choose Cypress College?

I'm from Indonesia. I have several reasons why I chose Cypress College over other community colleges. First, I live with my aunt who lives near Cypress. So I thought it would be convenient because it is not that far from my house and I can walk to school. Second, I liked the fountains at Cypress College when I saw them. It may sound bizarre, yet it is one of my reasons of choosing Cypress College. It gives a positive vibe to the environment when you want to relax, and I thought it also created a good study environment.

What made you study abroad? How is it different from your country?

I chose to study abroad to have experience of living in another country that, hopefully, will help me through my career. The food and the environment are pretty different from my country, especially the transportation. A portion over here is huge as it can be eaten by 2 people. The city I lived in, Jakarta, is noisier and more crowded than Cypress. However, it is safer, and the people over here are more

friendly to one another. The transportation is harder because when I came here, I did not have a car. The place where I live is quite far from the bus station, whereas in my country, there is a lot of public transportation everywhere.

Did studying here meet your expectations?

I honestly did not expect much from the education stand point because in my opinion, no matter where you go, your success depends on your goal. But the experience that I got here is more than what I expected as I was able to meet a lot of people from different countries and share our experience.

What is your major and how did you choose your major?

I am a finance major, but I was thinking to change my major to marketing.

How did you choose Cal State Long Beach?

I heard that CSULB is one of the best schools around this area.

Being a former ISP Ambassador, do you have any memorable experiences?

I have some memorable experiences that I got from being an ISP Ambassador. I was able to

be the part of a team to organize and design an idea for Cypress College's 50th Anniversary. Also, when I got the opportunity to become a class speaker to share my experience as an international student in front of American students, it was an honor for me to participate in such a big event as an international student representative, to become a class speaker, and also to work and know my fellow ISP ambassadors.

Is there any advice you would like to give to students who are undergoing the process of transferring and adjusting to a new environment?

For the students who are undergoing the process of transferring, meet with your counselors to plan for SEP and follow up with them. Remember to check the requirements and the due date to the university that you are interested to go to.

For the students who are adjusting to a new environment, do not be afraid to talk to someone and reach out for help. Cypress has a lot of media to help students to adjust to the new environment, such as the clubs, ISP lunch, and the student ambassadors.

- Article by: Su Bin Lee

Cypress College International Club

The purpose of the International Club is to provide a forum for the interaction between American and international students, to promote cultural understanding and enrichment of all students through social and educational events and activities, and to assist new students in adapting to college life.



International Club
Officers Spring 2016:
(From left to right)

Dwayne Ong - ICC Rep
Kenny Hu - Vice President
Laura Khong - President
Angelica Umbas - Treasurer
Jad Youness - ICC Rep
Bilal Siraj - Webmaster

Cypress College International Club Social Events

Picnic Day
Fall 2015

Beach Day
Fall 2015



Ice Skating Day
Fall 2015



Beach Bonfire
Spring 2016



Kindercaminata
Spring 2016



ISP Events



<< End of Year Celebration
Spring 2016



International Education Week
Fall 2015



Welcome Back Lunch

<< Fall 2015

Spring 2016 >>



International Students Program Office

Student Assistants

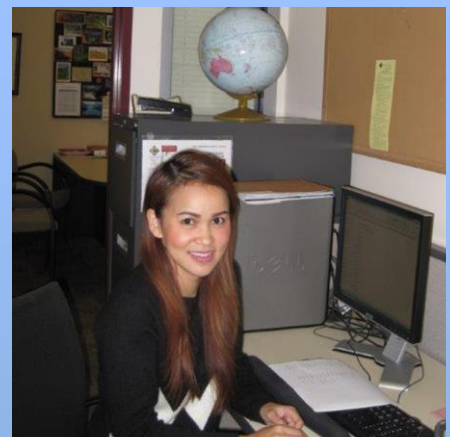


*Minhyeong Joe (Billy)-
Korea*

I've been working at the ISP office since April, 2015. As student assistants, we answer general questions, help new students with the application process and work on various projects when assigned. It has been a great opportunity for me to learn outside the textbooks and broaden my perspective. Helping students from all over the world, processing their applications helped me understand different cultures and embrace those differences. Gina and Yongmi, my supervisors are very friendly and patient. They are eager to teach us how to answer complicated inquiries from students, and are always patient even when we make mistakes.

It is really motivating and fun to work at the ISP office!

I've been working in the International Students Program for a year, and it has been such a great year for me. I've learned so many new things from the program. I have great opportunities to engage in on-campus activities. I've met and worked with many students from all over the world, and many of them have become my friends. I feel these experiences have changed and helped me a lot. Working in the ISP office is like a process of learning to adapt myself in a new environment. I am working under a great educational system that we have on campus. I have great supervisors and co-workers who always support me and I've been given a lot of feedback so that I am able to improve myself every day.



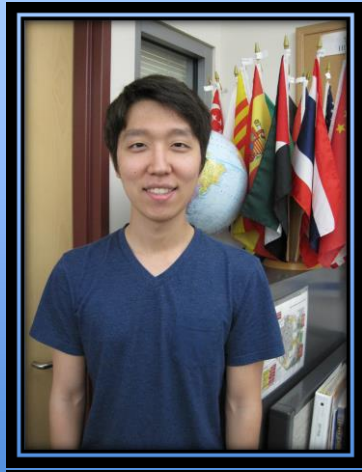
Truc Pham- Vietnam

Congratulations to the 2015-16 Scholarship Winners

ASSOCIATED STUDENTS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Kim Hour Peuv -
Cambodia



Donggun Lee –
South Korea



Dat Nguyen - Vietnam

ISP SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Donggun Lee (UC San Diego)

Kim Hour Peuv (UC Irvine)

Minhyeong Joe (UC Irvine)

Dat Nguyen (UC Berkeley)

Truc Pham (CSU Long Beach)

Ferlyn Saputri (Fall 2015 Transfer to CSU Long Beach)

Eun Jeong Chi (CSU Long Beach)

Ngoc Do (CSU Fullerton)

Nguyen Huynh (CSU Fullerton)

Moonsuk Jang (UC Berkeley)

Minjae Kim (CSU Fullerton)

Dongwon Lee (UC Berkeley)

Loan Nguyen (Chapman University)

Resources for International Students

Cypress College offers many resources to help our international students in their transition to college life and their attainment of higher education in the United States. Visit our website (cypresscollege.edu) for more information.

Learning Resource Center (LRC) - (714) 484-7193

The LRC offers the following services to currently enrolled Cypress College students:

- ☐ Tutorial Services
- ☐ English Success Center (ESC)
- ☐ Mathematics Learning Center (MLC)
- ☐ Supplemental Instruction (SI)

English as a Second Language Department (ESL) - (714) 484-7182

The ESL Department helps currently enrolled Cypress College students improve their English language skills. Students work on listening, speaking, reading and writing American English. The department also assists students in learning about life in the U.S.

Counseling Center - (714) 484-7015

Our counselors provide educational planning, career development and personal counseling. Cypress College students can visit their counselors during walk-in counseling hours or schedule an appointment.

Transfer Center - (714) 484-7182

The Transfer Center assists students in their transition from Cypress College to a four-year institution. Services include:

- ☐ Individual counseling
- ☐ Guidance in choosing a transfer institution
- ☐ Transfer Planning Classes, Workshops, and Assistance
- ☐ Transfer Fairs featuring University Representatives
- ☐ Scholarship Information and many other services

Health Center - (714) 484-7361

The Cypress College Health Center is a full service clinic, which means that services are provided by a Family Practice/Internal Medicine Physician, Certified Family Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurse and MFCC Therapist. Almost all services are covered by student health fees.

Services include:

- ☐ First Aid & Emergency Care
- ☐ Health Assessments (blood pressure screening & vision screening)
- ☐ Personal Health Counseling & Referrals
- ☐ Family Planning Services and many other services



On Leaving Cypress

My friends and family back home in South Korea sometimes ask me how it is studying in California. They say they are jealous when I tell them that I am having a great time, but it was not all easy adapting to new surroundings.

When I first decided to study in California, I was more worried than excited. Although I perfectly understood English because I studied in the Philippines, the English spoken in California was very different. I first realized that accent is really important because a lot of my American friends did not understand what I said because I spoke with a different accent. I had to learn the American accent to communicate better and eventually I got used to it, but it was still a tough experience changing what I was already used to.



I also did not know how to drive and had to ask for a ride every time I went out to buy food. What I really did not like about California was that having no car can limit your activities and almost all restaurants or grocery stores are closed by 10 p.m. Most of the restaurants where I came from were open 24 hours and there were lots of options for me to have them delivered to my house. However when I first moved here, I had to walk 40 minutes just to buy food if I couldn't find a ride. And when I got hungry at midnight while studying, I had to starve because all nearby restaurants were closed and California had a very poor delivery system. I knew that it was impossible to live in California without a car, but I didn't know it would be this bad until I experienced it. My life in California has gotten much better after I bought my first car, and now the first advice that I give to new international students is to get a driver's license as soon as possible!

I also had to go through small and big culture shocks here and there. I expected everything that I saw in Hollywood movies to be true but they weren't. I found cultural differences wherever I went, even at a restaurant. Back in my country, when I go out to eat with my friends, we order as a group and we share them. But here, we had to order individually and did not share the food. I remember when I bought 24 bottles of water for me and my roommates; they did not want to drink them even when I offered because they thought it was just for me. I explained to them about how I am used to sharing food back in my country, then we all started sharing food after that, which made our relationships closer and stronger.

Coming to Cypress College was a whole different experience. Even though Cypress is in California, it has its unique culture. Cypress College was different from other schools that I went to but I did not have a difficult time because I knew where to go when I had problems. Through the International Students Program, I was able to meet a lot of friends and counselors and build connections that made my stay at Cypress very enjoyable and exciting. For international students from other countries like me, giving us a sense of community and making us feel we belong helps a lot with adapting to a new environment and culture, and overcoming the stress of school and living apart from our families. I thank the International Students Program for what they do for international students and I wish they keep up the good work!

Article by: Donggun (Billy) Lee



Did you know?

Cypress College is ranked 3rd out of 112 community colleges in California by a www.schools.com. The assessment focuses on six criteria: transfers to the University of California and California State University systems, student-to-faculty ratio, affordability, distance education, retention rates, and graduation rates. Cypress College was recognized for its educational accessibility, affordability, and student success.

Cypress College was constructed in 1966 on a 112-acre campus. Currently, Cypress College enrolls over 16,000 students and offers more than 50 university-transfer majors, associate degrees in 61 areas of study, and 138 career certificate programs to its students.

In 2016-2017, Cypress College will celebrate its 50th-Year anniversary on April 1, 2017. There will be many activities and festivities for this celebration and a reunion of our alumni, faculty, and current students. The activities will include music, dance, 50th anniversary displays, and many other activities and performances.

As part of the celebration, our International Students Program is currently working on a display piece and photo collage highlighting historical data and student achievements since its institutionalization in 2003.

The International Students Program is looking forward to celebrating and participating in the 50th-Year Anniversary of Cypress College. Go Chargers!

- Article by: Kim Hour Peuv

Thank you for supporting the International Students Program



2015-16 ISP Student Ambassadors

- Pictured left to right:
Thy Le, Billy Lee,
Ana Nakano (Adjunct Counselor),
Su Bin Lee, Kim Hour Peuv
- Not Pictured:
Ferlyn Saputri, Cynthia Habonimana,
Dat Nguyen

North Orange County Community College District

Fred Williams, Interim Chancellor
Board of Trustees: Stephen Blount, Jeffrey. P. Brown,
Barbara Dunsheath, Leonard Lahtinen, Molly McClanahan,
M. Tony Ontiveros and Jacqueline Rodarte

Cypress College
Dr. Robert Simpson, President

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