International Night 2016 Brings Legends to the Stage

AIS put their creativity to work and developed an original theme for International Night 2016: Legends of the Earth. This year’s event featured more than fifteen different countries in ten performances, each one designed to share histories and legends through stories, music, and choreography. The event closed with the annual presentation of the International Service Award, this year given to AIS President Harvard Wong for his leadership and outstanding academic achievements. Enjoy photos (below and on the following page) from International Night 2016, taken by TU students and photographers Chuyi Wen and Luke Lau:
More AIS International Night 2016
Amigas para Siempre

Not every college student has a positive experience with his or her first roommate. It can be especially challenging when the roommates come from different cultural backgrounds. Maria Fernanda Ahumada and Teresa Stastry had no such difficulties, however. From the moment they arrived as freshmen in Fall 2014 and met in Lottie Jane Mabee Hall, they have been close friends.

“We were friends since the day we met,” says Teresa. “She was so sweet it was easy to become friends.”

Hanging out with Maria and her friends has also given her a chance to practice her Spanish and learn more about Maria’s home country of Colombia.

“I think what brought Maria and I together was that we were curious about each other’s countries, friends and lives,” she adds, noting that it’s easy to become friends with people when you are interested in the things they care about.

For Maria, they bonded instantly because of their deep talks and their common interests in dancing and attending TU events such as SpringFest. Maria says Teresa has helped her learn more about the music and culture of the U.S. as well as the Greek life system, but for Teresa, one of the highlights of their friendship was taking Maria to her home town of Omaha and visiting the zoo and The Old Market together. Both say that their friendship has really helped them open their minds and learn to not only accept but also appreciate differences.

“You should open your mind and heart to any opportunity of reaching new people,” says Maria. “Getting to know different people from different backgrounds is a unique experience that can happen during college life and should not be taken for granted.”

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Don’t cram at the last second. Try studying for 60-90 minutes per day for a week leading up to an exam. All-nighters simply don’t work for most people, and students experience declining returns on their efforts when they attempt to study for four and five hours straight.

Complete practice tests. You may have thought highlighting, re-reading and summation would be effective ways to study. Think again! Scientific studies have found that these techniques do not consistently boost students’ performance. Practice testing through the use of flashcards, or taking practice exams was observed to be a highly effective studying technique.

Do not multi-task while studying. Set aside time to study in advance and then follow through. For most people, that means leaving your dorm room and turning off visual/auditory distractions, including iPods, Facebook, and music with lyrics.

Find ways to apply materials from class. Think about how course topics relate to your personal interests, societal problems and controversies, issues raised in other classes, or different experiences in your life.

Make sure to get plenty of sleep. Sleeping hours are often the time when we completely synthesize information, especially topics we’ve covered in the couple of hours before bedtime. You want to be as fresh as possible and able to fully engage your working memory when you take the exam. Also, don’t stop exercising or taking time for yourself, even at final exam time.

Eat healthy. Everybody knows you should eat breakfast the day of a big test. Research suggests that high-carb, high-fiber, slow-digesting foods like oatmeal are best (oatmeal is more fulfilling than cereal). But what you eat a week in advance matters, too. Students who ate a balanced diet that included fruit and vegetables had the best performance. When you study, your brain consumes glucose, so take a five-minute break every hour to let your body produce more fuel for your studying. Eating a healthy snack is very beneficial and can make a significant difference (almonds, fruit, and yogurt are good choices).

Cardio is important. Science says that just 20 minutes of cardio can improve your memory. Whether you’re dancing, jogging or busting a sweat by walking, exercise will increase your energy level and reduce the effects of stress. Very important!

Reprinted from http://blog.suny.edu/2013/12/scientifically-the-best-ways-to-prepare-for-final-exams/
A Successful Student-Staff ‘Cane Connection

We recently had the opportunity to meet with Susan Layman, Senior Administrative Associate to the President, and Yuan Li, a Petroleum Engineering junior from China. Susan and Yuan are participants in ‘Cane Connections, a program sponsored by ISS designed to match U.S. students or staff members with international students to meet a few times each semester and learn more about the cultures of one another. Susan and Yuan bonded quickly and have really gone above and beyond to make ‘Cane Connections an enriching and educational experience. They graciously took time out of their busy schedules to answer a few questions for ISS:

ISS: Why did you decide to participate in Cane Connections?

Susan: I decided to participate in ‘Cane Connections because the thought of building a personal relationship with a student from abroad seemed like a positive experience. I love traveling abroad and learning about different cultures. This program seemed to bring some of the travel experience right to my front door. My expectations were that I would learn a lot about a student and their country and make a new friend in the process. Also, that I will have the opportunity to introduce a student to the city of Tulsa and enjoy getting to know someone whose background is completely different than my own.

Yuan: I do not have many connections with the U.S. people in Tulsa, but I have already been here about two years. Therefore, I deeply hope I can learn something not only about the classes but also anything about the U.S., and hopefully make a great friend. Also, it will be great to let people know more about China through this program.

ISS: What makes the two of you a good match?

Susan: There are several reasons I believe Yuan and I are a good match. First, she and I are anxious to learn about each other’s homelands. She is very intelligent and yet seems very quiet, much like I was as a young girl. I’m pleased and excited to introduce her to different customs and American culture. I’m hoping she will give me the same gift of friendship and knowledge. Not just for the next two years, but throughout our lifetimes.

Yuan: I am pretty sure we will become great friends. Mrs. Susan is a very nice lady. She is concerned about me, and willing to help me if I have needs. Since I don’t have a car she told me I could go with her if I want, and told me to be safe like remember to lock the door and if I am feeling uncomfortable, I could contact her. I feel very warm.

ISS: What is something surprising that you have learned about the other person or her culture?

Susan: I grew up completely immersed in family life, spending every day in activities centered on family and friends. My education was important, but my family life was my world. Through her high school years, Yuan studied at boarding school through the week, then would return to her family home each weekend. In the Global Community Staff Development Program I learned about the high priority given to education from a young age in China. Yuan and her family’s dedication to higher education was not a surprise, but hearing the reality of the intense pursuit of education brought the Global Community lessons home to me.

Yuan: I have learned about her concern for others and she is very elegant. I hope I could be like her.

ISS: How has Cane Connections benefited you?

Susan: Participating in Cane Connection has removed any hesitation I previously experienced when meeting foreign students and visitors. Now I’m anxious to learn as much as possible about each individual without any hesitation.

Yuan: I found a great friend, and I have learned more about U.S. culture.

ISS: Would you recommend Cane Connections to others? If so, why?

Susan: If you’re thinking about joining Cane Connections I recommend the program highly. TU’s campus is beautiful. It offers many amenities to students to help them feel comfortable and safe. But to really learn about Tulsa or the United States, campus living should not be a one-dimensional experience. As a Cane Connection friend, you can be the person to provide the link between the college life and the wider world of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and America. You’ll have a great time!

Yuan: Yes, I think it is a great opportunity to let people from two different countries learn from each other. Although you and your partner may have great cultural differences and may not be able to fully understand each other, if you accept their culture and truly care about each other, the hearts will know.