

Spring 2012

## International Panther, Spring 2012

University of Northern Iowa. Culture and Intensive english Program.

*Let us know how access to this document benefits you*

Copyright ©2012 Culture and Intensive english Program, University of Northern Iowa

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/ciepnews>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa. Culture and Intensive english Program., "International Panther, Spring 2012" (2012). *International Panther*. 9.

<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/ciepnews/9>

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Culture and Intensive English Program at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Panther by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uni.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uni.edu).

**Offensive Materials Statement:** Materials located in UNI ScholarWorks come from a broad range of sources and time periods. Some of these materials may contain offensive stereotypes, ideas, visuals, or language.

# International Panther



Spring/Summer 2012

## From the Director, Phil Plourde...

The CIEP is ending a busy semester that was notable for several events related to its staffing. This year, Lauren Rein, Jaime Lyon, and Petra Maier were promoted to Academic Support Specialist status. In addition, CIEP began several searches to fill positions of Academic Support Coordinator, Academic Support Assistant, and Program Assistant. All three searches are nearing completion and persons selected for the respective positions will start in August.

Also related to the CIEP staff were several opportunities for professional development. These included staff members attending the regional NAFSA conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and the International TESOL Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Closer to home, the CIEP sponsored two all-day staff development workshops on team building as conducted by the UNI Executive Development Center on campus.

Several CIEP staff members have been working on projects to improve the program. Most notable are three members of the instructional staff: Emily Luttrell-Narigon, Gail Farber, and Lauren Rein. Emily spent considerable time working to "clean up" and revise standardized exams in grammar and reading and worked closely with Lauren Rein to improve the Level 7 Reading curriculum. She also mentored the Bridge-Level instructors in assisting them towards a better understanding of the beginning level curriculum and the needs of its students. Likewise, Gail Farber worked on numerous "maintenance projects" related to curriculum issues in Levels 5 and 6 in Grammar and Reading. Gail also assisted in the Academic Support Assistant Search, the Dianji University Summer Curriculum project, and was a mentor for the new teachers. Gail also worked with Jaime Lyon in the "Reading Safari" project. Finally, Lauren Rein's project focused on the usefulness of the program's student learning outcomes. More specifically, she surveyed and interviewed numerous UNI faculty members about the qualifications and criteria required of new students entering various academic programs of study on the UNI campus.

CIEP students have also had the opportunity to participate in new activities this year. In addition to traditional activities, this

semester students had the chance to travel to Chicago and Minneapolis. In the classroom, CIEP students are using various forms of technology to enhance their learning. CIEP teachers are using UNI's eLearning system, which is essentially an online classroom and forum, allowing students to submit assignments and participate in discussions with peers.

Each year, we work continuously to make our program better for the students. Over the past year, we have translated many documents and several sections of the CIEP website into nine languages to help all students receive accurate information and to make the transition to UNI as easy as possible.

Between February 14 and 20, I traveled to Guangxi Province in Southeastern China as part of a seven person delegation representing the City of Cedar Falls. The purpose of the trip was to explore economic cooperation and educational exchange with Laibin City, the sister city of Cedar Falls in China. I traveled with the Cedar Falls delegation which included members of the city council, real estate development community, economic development offices, and Cedar Falls Superintendent of Schools. The specific goals of the delegation are still being planned and discussed; however, my participation in this delegation is to facilitate possible exchanges of students between the University of Northern Iowa and schools in Laibin City. The Cedar Falls delegation was overwhelmed by the reception and hospitality shown to the group. We met with various groups representing governmental, civic, educational, and industrial interests. Most important of these visits for UNI was the visit to the regional high school and teachers' college. On behalf of the CIEP, I would like to wish all students and staff a safe and enjoyable break.



Phil Plourde, CIEP Director



### Inside this Issue:

Current Student Profile: Victor Chevrot [2]  
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program [3]  
Cultural & Social Activities [4]

Former Student: Leila Rod-Welch [6]  
Former Student: Abdoulaye Tangara [7]  
International Friendship Program [8]

CIEP Graduates [9]  
CIEP Translation Staff [10]  
World's Window: Saudi Arabia [12]



## Welcome to the Culture & Intensive English Program!

### January 2012

Dzodzoe Akatchy-Heponou

Zainab Alghanim

Saleh Almahrous

Nawal Alsharari

Mohammed Alsharari

Madher Alsultan

Ali Altalaq

Victor Chevrot

Louise Sabransky

Abdullah Abaoud

Abdulhadi Al Aljmi

Ahmed Alaqeel

Adnan Alawami

Badriah Alfaraj

Murtada Almahasnah

Hamoud Alqahtani

Mohammed AlSaad

Mohanad AlSaif

Mohammed Alsanad

Hanadi Alyami

Abdulaziz Khubarni

Naba Tuhaifa

### March 2012

Jaafar Alsultan

Jens Ludwig

Rafael Uribe

Abdullah Aldawoud

Naif Almuneef

Mana Almustanyir

Sarah Anemer

Abdulhadi Alqahtani

Bandar Alsabt

Hasan Alsaigh

Khalid Alsharari

Salman Alshawaf

Faris Alshobaini

Bally Cheick

Mo Cheng



*Shawna Schrock, Activities Coordinator Assistant*

**V**ICTOR came from his hometown, Marseille, France to the United States for the first time in January of this year. He was embarking on a new phase in his life with the goal of learning English. When asked about his very first impressions of Iowa, he said, "I was so excited, because everything was so new!"

Having grown up in a larger city, well known for its beauty and attractions, Victor commented that Cedar Falls is a good place to study. He added that people are friendly here and there are fewer things to distract a student.

Victor first learned about the CIEP when he made a simple Google search for "Studying English in the United States." He says, "The CIEP at the University of Northern Iowa was the first link that came up, and so I chose that one."

Before coming to the CIEP Victor spent three years studying business at a university in his hometown. During this time he also gained experience working in sales, as well as doing some stand-up comedy at several local venues.

After completing his business degree and leaving his job, Victor decided to travel internationally. Reflecting his spontaneous personality, he packed his bags, headed to the airport, and bought a ticket for the first international flight leaving the country. His first destination became South Africa, where he spent approximately one month. Over the next eight months he traveled to Australia, Mexico, and quite a few

countries in Central and South America. Victor says, "It was on these trips that I realized I needed to improve my English." He then returned home for several months before coming to the United States to study English.

When asked what advice he would give to people who may be thinking about studying abroad, Victor replied, "Don't think too much, just do it!" Victor's exploratory and spontaneous attitude has allowed him to have many positive learning experiences while here. Over Spring break this year he had the opportunity to travel with other students to several cities in California, as well as Las Vegas.

Victor concludes, however, that his favorite part of the CIEP is the Conversation Partner Program. He considers not only the practice of conversational English with native speakers to be invaluable, but also the friendships he has made as a result of this program. "It really helps us to improve our speaking and meet new people," he said.

Victor plans on staying at the CIEP to complete his study of English, which he is likely to finish before the end of the year. He is unsure about what exactly he will do after completing the CIEP, but is exploring the possibilities of getting his Masters degree and possibly a minor in theater. In the meantime, however, he is concerned with taking advantage of the many opportunities in front of him right now, and enjoying them fully!



## Retirement life matters: Marty Seibert, a former High school English teacher

Sally Roos, CIEP Activities Coordinator

**ONE SMILE...** one hug... one conversation... that's all it takes to make a genuine contribution to someone's life. That is Marty Seibert's perspective as a member of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) that has been a successful CIEP contribution for the past six years. The RSVP is guided by seniors (age 55+) from the community who volunteer their time one hour a week to meet with international students at the Wesley Foundation.

Each week, Marty looks forward to meeting with students as they discuss culture, language, and life in general. On Tuesday, April 5th, the new phrase was "hodgepodge," which means a mix of different things. Marty introduced it to the students in the beginning of the conversation and referred to it again later while discussing the unique combination of religious groups in the United States. Vocabulary and word choice are challenging aspects of the volunteer work, according to Seibert.

"I have to back myself down every now and then," said Marty about teaching new words. "...I'm getting better at it. You have to kind of pick up on the body language."

Ruth Buck, the volunteer coordinator with RSVP, suggested the conversation hour to Marty four years ago because of her experience teaching English in Iowa and Minnesota high schools. Bill

Seibert, who passed away about one year ago after 40 years of marriage, had been volunteering with the Senior Health Insurance Information Program in partnership with RSVP. Marty decided to give CIEP a try and came to enjoy it.



"To learn about other cultures is tremendous," she said. "We're supposed to be teaching them, but it's the opposite."

Sometimes students pleasantly surprise Marty. Several women from Saudi Arabia have left a particular impression on her.

"They're opening up a bit more," she remarked.

Marty and her good friend Caroline Schroeder reminisced about a few conversations they had with some of the women about married life. They related and

joked about some gender differences that affect marriage in all cultures.

Caroline remembers having a conversation

with a different group of students about the need to practice speaking in English outside of the classroom. She challenged them to watch television in English or speak English among themselves in the evenings.

Moments later, Caroline caught the students

speaking loudly in their first language outside the building.

"...What is this?," she teased. "I hear you're speaking in Arabic ...one student turned around and said, 'but I was thinking in English!'" The volunteer laughed at the memory.

After four years, Marty also admitted to opening up on her end of the conversation.

"I was initially afraid of insulting the other culture, but I'm much more at ease with that now," she said.

Marty stays busy the rest of the week by ushering at the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, volunteering at Birthright, helping at church, playing bridge with friends, watching movies, and completing the crosswords that come out in the newspapers. She also enjoys traveling and spending time with her children and grandchildren.

"I'm very busy, by design, I guess," she said.

*To learn more about the RSVP program, or to see how you can participate as a student or volunteer, contact Sally Roos at [sally.roos@uni.edu](mailto:sally.roos@uni.edu).*

---

**"To learn about other cultures is tremendous...We're supposed to be teaching them, but it's the opposite."**

---

*-Marty Siebert*

---



# Spring 2012 Social and Cultural Activities



## Class Exchanges

CIEP students can participate in class exchanges. During this exchange, CIEP students meet with current UNI students. They share stories about their culture, community, lifestyle, family, leisure activities, other places the students may have traveled, and being a student in America.

## Skiing at SunDown Mountain

In February 2012, students took to the slopes at SunDown Mountain in Dubuque, Iowa. They learned the basics of skiing and spent the day enjoying winter in Iowa.



## School Service Day

On March 23rd, CIEP students visited PFG Best Daycare, the UNI Child Development Center, the Windsor Nursing Home, Cedar Falls High School and Price Lab School. The students had the opportunity to interact with people of all ages, teach some of their languages to others, and see what a typical school day is like in Iowa.



## Des Moines Trip

On April 21, CIEP students traveled to the capital of Iowa. They spent the day visiting the Iowa State Capitol, viewing an IMAX film and shopping at the Jordan Creek Mall.





### Minneapolis Trip

During the weekend of April 14, students had the opportunity to travel to Minneapolis, Minnesota. On this two-day trip, students visited the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Mall of America.

### Culture Fest

On March 30, CIEP students participated in the fifth annual Culture Fest at the Waterloo Center for the Arts. This event is an opportunity for students of all ages and the Cedar Falls/Waterloo community to eat a variety of foods, and participate in activities, crafts and performances from all over the globe.



### Culture Discussions

Throughout the year, CIEP hosts several culture lectures and discussions giving students the chance to learn about an aspect of American culture. This semester's culture topics included: nonverbal communication, social media, friendships, dating, sleep, baseball, St. Patrick's Day, perception of time, collectivism versus individualism, and weddings.

### Spring 2012 Cultural Activities included:

- Book Safari
- RSVP
- Culture Talks
- UNI Basketball Games
- Martin Luther King Jr. Volunteer Day
- Teambuilding Day
- Girl's Night
- Ski Trip
- Class Exchange
- Bowling with Conversation Partners
- Movie Night
- Coffee Hour
- Backyard Baseball
- Inclusivity Activity
- Service-Learning Day
- Soccer Game
- Culture Fest
- Breakfast for Dinner
- Guys Night Out



## LEILA ROD- WELCH

**HOME COUNTRY:** Iran

**CIEP GRADUATE:** May 2002

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:**

Reference Librarian and  
Instructor, University of  
Northern Iowa Rod Library

**FAVORITE THING ABOUT CIEP:**

"I really liked the CIEP instructors. They were caring and encouraged me in my learning. In addition to learning English, I also learned about American culture... [CIEP Instructors] were caring and they took an interest in their students, in their personal and professional lives and in their achievements."

**ADVICE FOR STUDENTS THINKING ABOUT ATTENDING CIEP:**

"The CIEP is a must attend! Attending the CIEP was one of the best choices I made when coming to UNI. It was a decision I do not regret. It will help make you more successful with your educational and career goals."



# CIEP Alumni, Leila Rod-Welch continues work at UNI

Cristy Steffen, CIEP Promotions Assistant

**WHEN LEILA ROD-WELCH** BEGAN THE CIEP PROGRAM, she had no idea that she would gain the skills necessary for her future career, meet her husband, or find numerous lifelong friends; Leila simply enrolled in CIEP to fulfill the requirements of her graduate program at UNI.

Soon after arriving on the UNI campus, Leila realized that she needed to focus on improving her English skills before moving on to academic classes and her future plans.

"CIEP helped me a lot in my education. It prepared me for classes after CIEP with better English, writing and speaking skills, and good study habits." After successfully completing the CIEP, Leila earned two masters and a doctorate degree. She has also written articles, presented at conferences and published her own book.

"Without attending CIEP, I could not have succeeded in my education or in my life in the U.S."

Upon reflecting on her CIEP experiences, Leila comments, "CIEP changed my life." After receiving her CIEP certificate in May of 2002, Leila has been a proud employee of the UNI Rod Library. She uses her CIEP skills everyday as she assists students with research, writing, and answering reference questions.

While she was a student at CIEP, Leila participated in many activities and the conversation partner program.

"We missed many things such as our traditional food; our culture; and the large, crowded city we grew up in. Fortunately, CIEP activities helped us to forget our loneliness and many of our struggles."

Leila looks back fondly on her memories of CIEP. From potlucks to cultural activities and just the people Leila met, "attending CIEP was one of the best choices I made when coming to UNI." But her favorite memory was one that occurred in the Rod Library, which is where she met her husband.

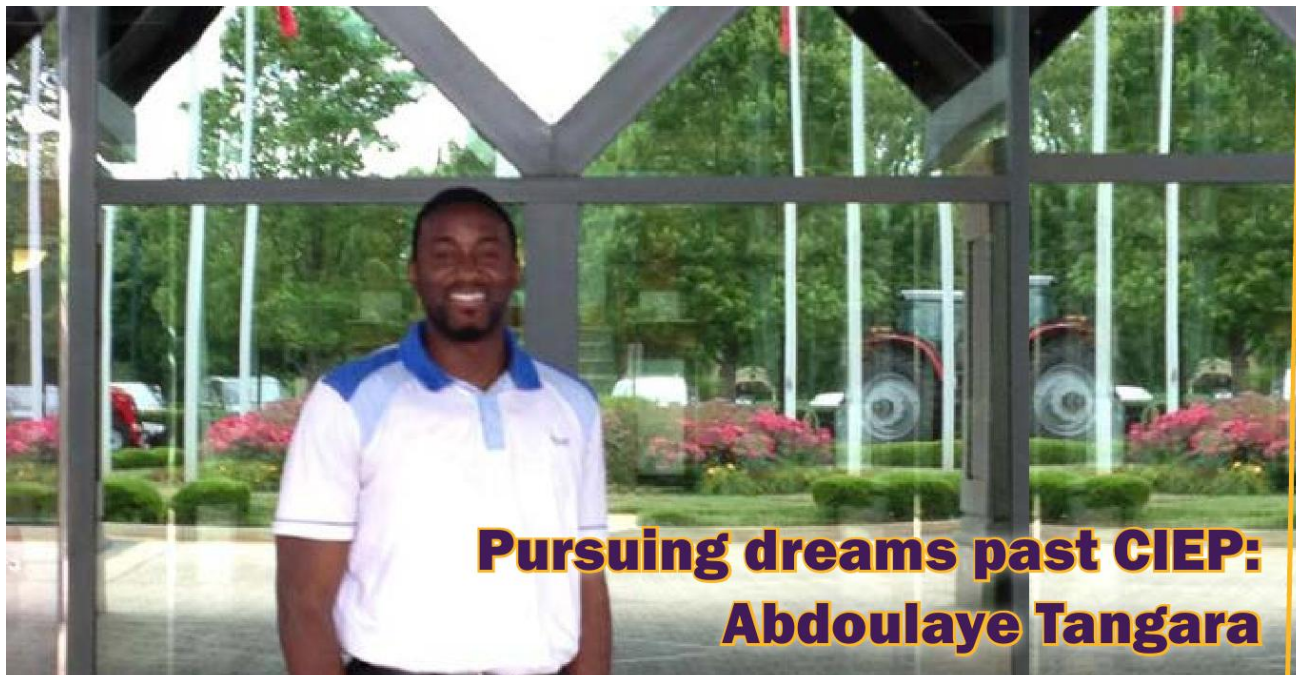
"I first met him when my library card did not work. At this time, my English was still not very good and I had trouble communicating with him. Over the years, we became good friends and later married."

After a positive and successful experience in the CIEP, Leila believes students cannot go wrong by attending CIEP and she gives this advice to students who are currently studying in the program:

"Listen to your instructors; you can learn so much from them. Go above and beyond just doing your assignments and homework, I promise you that it will pay off!"

CIEP is proud to have Leila among the group of CIEP alumni. We wish her continued success and the best of luck!





## Pursuing dreams past CIEP: Abdoulaye Tangara

*Vanessa Hilst Robles, CIEP Office Assistant*

**EVEN THOUGH** Mali is going through difficult times, Abdoulaye Tangara, a former CIEP student from Mali, Africa, is achieving his dreams.

Tangara decided to participate in CIEP because "...it provided the right combination of learning in context: a fine balance of language and culture that smoothes out the obvious cultural shock that comes along with moving to another country."

Tangara attended UNI for four years and graduated from the College of Business with a degree in Management and Administration. UNI proved to be a great fit for Tangara, and he definitely made the most of his time here, as he kept busy by participating in intramural sports, was a leader as a board member of Maucker Union and served as Treasurer and then President of Bartlett Hall. This hardworking go-getter was even a founder of the University of Northern Iowa African Union (UNIAU). Even through all his achievements, Tangara found time to participate in many activities, especially the CIEP potlucks. "Eating is one of my hobbies, so I loved trying dishes from around the world and [the potlucks] were also a very colorful place since most students would wear traditional clothing."

While in the CIEP, Tangara loved the diversity of the program. "CIEP was like the United Nations, we had people from all corners of the world, and everyone brought their cultures, languages and traditions with them, so as I was learning English and the American culture, I was also learning from my classmates about the Japanese culture, the Chinese culture, the Saudi

Arabian culture and so on."

Since graduating, Tangara has moved to Georgia to work as a Remarketing Manager for De Lage Landen Financial Services Inc., but certainly did not depart UNI without leaving his mark!

It seems as though Tangara reflects on his time at UNI almost as if it had always been his home. In fact, Tangara says, "I always tell people that I was born in Mali, but I grew up in Iowa, because it was in Iowa that I learned how to do a lot of things for myself."

---

**"I always tell people that I was born in Mali, but I grew up in Iowa, because it was in Iowa that I learned how to do a lot of things for myself".**

---

Tangara reports that he now uses the skills he acquired by participating in CIEP in his everyday life, whether it is interacting with friends or leading a meeting at work. He tells others that CIEP is a wonderful program because of its balanced approach to learning and the resources CIEP provides to help them achieve their goals. CIEP is honored to have such an outstanding alumnus!

Before moving to the United States, Tangara said he had never done a load of laundry, managed money, or worked a day in his life.





# It takes a family to welcome international students to the global community

Sally Roos, Activities Coordinator

**BRENDA CORWIN** told a CIEP staff member that she felt she was collecting students. Brenda and her husband, Chuck, have hosted 5 students during the last four years as part of the International Friendship Program at the University of Northern Iowa.

“We love to hear their stories,” commented Chuck.

The couple likes to have students in their home for the holidays, take them kayaking in the summer, introduce them to the extended family, bring them to church, cook for them, and try some of their ethnic cuisine.

On a recent weekend, CIEP students Saeko Tsuji, Eri Goto and Yuka Kohama prepared Japanese food for the couple.

“We have an official student assigned to us, but we like meeting their friends, too,” said Brenda.

The couple, who has been married for 38 years, works in helping professions related to substance abuse. Chuck is a substance abuse counselor for Pathways, a treatment facility in Waterloo, Iowa, and Brenda works in the substance unit as a registered nurse for Covenant Medical Center. Kathy Schmidt, another participant in the International

Friendship Program, shared about her experiences and convinced them to get involved. They have two adult children, Shelly, 36, and Chris, 33, who also live in Iowa, and a granddaughter named Kalli. The extended family likes to get to know international students as well.

“They’ve gotten used to us having the kids around,” said Chuck referring to his UNI students as his own.

Brenda’s sister and brother-in-law loan



Zaid, Saeko, Chuck, Brenda, Raed, and Eri pose for a picture after enjoying a day together and participating in a spring egg hunt activity.

out the kayaks for warm-weather outings. Chuck’s 91 and 92-year old parents have met a few students. Meanwhile, Brenda is working to arrange a visit to their granddaughter’s school for Saeko and Raed Alwaqfi, an international student from Jordan. Kalli’s teacher is interested in incorporating the student visits into the World Geography curriculum.

“It’s also good for our granddaughter, especially when she was little and innocent,” said Brenda about the program.

Raed introduced his American family to his sister during a trip to California in June 2010. Brenda remembers the first time they met Raed.

“I said, ‘You can call us Chuck and Brenda.’ He said, ‘Can I call you Mom and Dad?’” she reflected.

One of the most memorable moments for Chuck was saying goodbye to their first student Maki Ishida. He remembers the tears at the airport. They still hear from her via email occasionally. They also remember

taking Hsueh-Ling, a student from Taiwan, Raed and his brother, Zaid, to “A Tribute to Buddy Holly” at the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center at UNI. The students enjoyed watching their host dad move to the music from his generation. According to Chuck, the students appreciate the hugs, joking, and fun.

“Show them that you care, and you do want to get to know them,” said Chuck, advising future families.

Brenda offered her advice as well:

“You don’t have to think of the big stuff to take them to, just include them in your family activities!”

The CIEP International Friendship Program is a way for students to learn American culture and conversation skills in the community. If a student is interested in having a meal once a month with a family in Cedar Falls or Waterloo, then this is the program to join! These families want to learn more about international students and their cultures by being host families. Students will not live with the families, but will visit them and participate in family activities together.

**“We love to hear their stories”**

*- Chuck Corwin*

Visit this website to apply for the International Friendship Program:  
[www.uni.edu/ciep/activities/ifp](http://www.uni.edu/ciep/activities/ifp)

# CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

## SPRING 1 2012

**Arwa Aljahdali**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study for masters in Applied  
Physics at UNI

**Nada Aljahdali**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Biology at UNI

**Eman Almabuk**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Management Information  
Systems at UNI

**Mohammed Alshakhuri**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Electrical Engineering  
Technology at UNI

**Hawra Alzayer**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Finance at UNI

**Mohammed Othman**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study for a masters in  
Business Administration at UNI

**Ghufran Owaishir**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Interior Design at UNI

**Danyang Wang**  
China

Will study Marketing,  
Management at UNI

**Liyuan Zhou**  
China

Will study Elementary  
Education at UNI

## SPRING 2 2012

**Ahlam Alfaraj**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Health Promotion at UNI

**Maryam Alnasser**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study at UNI

**Abdullah Altair**  
Saudi Arabia

Will study Manufacturing at UNI

**Francheska Arbore**  
Venezuela

Will study Textile & Apparel at UNI

**Eri Goto**  
Japan

Will graduate from Kansai Gaidai

**Yuka Kohama**  
Japan

Will graduate from Kansai Gaidai

**Yinghong Shao**  
China

Will study Marketing at UNI

**Saeko Tsuji**  
Japan

Will study abroad & take academic  
classes

**Yuki Yamamoto**  
Japan

Will graduate from Kansai Gaidai

## Welcome to our new staff members!

**Wid Allehaiby**  
Arabic Translator

**Tawrat AlFardan**  
Arabic Translator

**Christian Brantley**  
Housekeeper

**Vanessa Hilst Robles**  
Office Assistant

**Forest Hoff**  
Program Assistant

**Anh Thuy Le**  
Vietnamese Translator

**Miriam Ralston**  
Program Assistant

**Sujeong Seo**  
Korean Translator



Best wishes to you all!



# Meet the CIEP Interpreters!

*Over the past year, the CIEP has added several student interpreters/translators to the staff. These translators are available throughout the year and especially during the orientation program to help students understand new policies and important documents as well as helping students to adjust to life in Iowa.*

## Tawrat Al Fardan

Tawrat is currently studying Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Since completing her CIEP coursework in May 2011, Tawrat has succeeded in her academic classes at UNI and plans to pursue a masters degree in TESOL. She is from Saudi Arabia and decided to travel to UNI because her husband was also a student here. Impressed with the education college, Tawrat looks forward to earning her TESOL degree. She has worked as a CIEP translator since May 2012 and enjoys that her work tests her abilities and is helping her to gain experience she will utilize in the future. Working as an interpreter, Tawrat believes this experience will help her to learn how to approach all international students in her future TESOL career.

## Wid Allehaiby

Wid Allehaiby is currently a graduate student working towards her masters degree in TESOL. She made the decision to attend UNI because of its good reputation and high quality of the M.A. TESOL program. Wid is a native from Saudi Arabia, a country known for its deserts, seas, palm trees and the Two Holy Mosques. Wid describes her work at CIEP saying, "Working at CIEP will undoubtedly be a fruitful experience as it'll allow me an opportunity to test my skills and knowledge as an English/Arabic translator and interpreter." Wid has always admired the UNI community for its diversity and acceptance of students from all parts of the world, and is looking forward to meeting more international students and becoming part of the staff that made her feel welcome.

## Atiqah ALSaeed

Atiqah ALSaeed began working as a translator in June 2011. Over the last year, Atiqah has been an excellent member of the CIEP staff. She recently graduated from UNI with a bachelor's degree in Management Information Systems (MIS). She came to the United States from her home country of Saudi Arabia to earn her degree in MIS. Upon arrival, she began her CIEP courses and successfully transitioned into academic courses at UNI. She enjoys working with international students because it allows her to learn various things. "Every time I meet an international student, I understand something about life. I am always eager to see different perceptions about things, and being with international students allows me to experience that. I also learn to listen and respect others."

## Umaru Balde

Umaru is currently a senior at UNI studying for a degree in Political Science. He is fluent in Arabic, English, French, Hebrew, Portuguese, Spanish, and a few dialects. He is originally from the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, a Portuguese speaking country in West Africa. He belongs to the Fulani tribe and traveled to Egypt when he was very young. Umaru came to UNI because he was impressed with the success that several of his friends have had here. "Some of the most important things that attracted me to UNI are the cultural diversity and availability of academic services." Umaru enjoys interacting with people from different cultural and social backgrounds and believes his experiences here will be very beneficial in his career. "Working as a translator will help me a lot in my future because my dream is to be a human rights activist, defending women and children, because they are the most underrepresented in the developing countries from which I came."



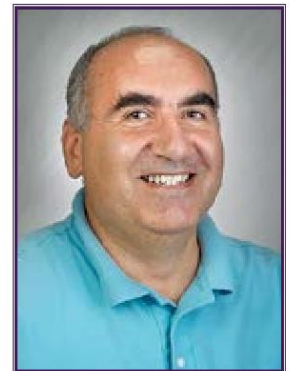
## Anh Thuy Le

Anh Thuy Le is one of the newest members of the CIEP translation staff. A native Vietnamese speaker, Anh also can speak English and French. She is a senior at the university, working towards a pre-dentistry degree. Her home country is located in southeast Asia, and with both borders connecting to the ocean, Anh states, "it is wonderful for seafood and seashore traveling." Anh chose UNI because she was looking for a quality pre-dentistry program. She is looking forward to working at CIEP to gain experience working with other international students.



## Harun Parpucu

Harun is a Turkish translator who is pursuing a masters degree in Education at UNI. He decided to come to UNI because of the quality of the education program. In Turkey and Kazakhstan, he has been an English teacher in both the middle school and university levels. Harun enjoys working with international students because of all the things he can learn from them. "International students bring different perspectives and they contribute to the education system in diverse ways. As an international student myself, I think I can understand them. I enjoy meeting diverse people and experiencing their diverse perspectives."



## Sujeong Seo

Sujeong began working as a translator in May 2012 and is working towards her degree in Technology Management. From the Republic of Korea, Sujeong (or SJ as she is known to the staff) came to UNI to focus on studying in a quality institution. Before choosing to study abroad, SJ also studied Industrial Management Engineering at Sungkyul University in Anyang of South Korea. At CIEP, she enjoys being able to help Korean students study and communicate.



## Yuqi Zhao

Yuqi Zhao is a senior Finance major at UNI. She chose to attend UNI based on the quality of the business program. She is originally from China, a country she describes as having "the best food in the world," and "a culture of peace, hard work and self-motivation." She has been an interpreter for CIEP since 2011. She enjoys getting to know the students and helping them by answering questions. When asked about her experiences at CIEP, Yuqi said, "I gain a lot of experience from being a translator and interpreter...it helps me to become a better person. To help people is the original source of happiness."





# CIEP World's Window: Saudi Arabia

Wid Allehaiby, CIEP Interpreter



**IN A LAND** where traditional customs and modern lifestyle meet, celebrations and festivals come alive to portray a striking picture of an eccentric yet interesting blend. Every year, with the commencement of spring, Saudi Arabia hosts the Al Janadriyah Heritage and Cultural Festival; a two-week event that symbolizes the nation's pride of its rich history, heritage, culture, art, music, folklore dance and poetry. The festival was first established by King Abdullah, who was crown prince at the time, in 1985. In Arabic, the word 'Al-Janadriyah' 'جندرية' is a noun derived from the verb 'jandara' 'رَدَج' that refers to the act in which possessions, such as clothes, are repolished after losing their smoothness or shininess using a wooden tool.

The grand extravagant opening of the festival is the most spectacular and most anticipated part of the entire event. The sky is lit in green and white (colors of the Saudi flag), folklore music from all the regions of the kingdom entertains the ears, the taste of exquisite traditional food enriches the senses, and the smell of incense so woody and musky covers the air. The grand opening is started with the Grand Annual Camel Race where hundreds of camel racers and thousands of camels participate. Then, at night, a series of traditional musical performances and folklore dances take place within a huge arena in the attendance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah, honored guests, and thousands of visitors.

The people wear traditional Saudi wardrobe and are ready to immerse themselves in the spirits of the festival. Al-Janadriyah is the perfect place to showcase folkloric handcrafted skills that ancestors used to depend on as a financial supporter of their lifestyle. These skills include weaving carpets, making pottery, carving wood, and forging metals and blades. In the evening, after spending an eventful day visiting art exhibitions, dancing to the sounds of the drums, or listening to the traditional Arabic poetry, visitors can indulge themselves in traditional food that is especially prepared for this occasion from different parts of the kingdom. The night ends with spectacular fireworks igniting the sky.

## Fast Facts about Saudi Arabia

Population: 27,448,086

Native Language: Arabic

Capital City: Riyadh

Currency: Riyal

- \* In the summer months, temperatures in Saudi Arabia are usually above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- \*The prime industry is petroleum.
- \*This country is geographically surrounded by the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea and the Arabian Gulf.
- \*The land is 98% purely desert.

Culture & Intensive English Program  
University of Northern Iowa  
72 Baker Hall  
Cedar Falls, Iowa, 50613-0511

Telephone: 319-273-2182  
Fax: 319-273-3333  
Email: [ciepadmissions@uni.edu](mailto:ciepadmissions@uni.edu)  
Website: [www.uni.edu/ciep](http://www.uni.edu/ciep)

