

Spring 2011

International Panther, Spring 2011

University of Northern Iowa. Culture and Intensive english Program.

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The International Panther

Spring/Summer 2011

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TECHNOLOGY NEWS

It is a new year for Blackboard! In August, UNI's Educational Technology center will begin Blackboard 9, the newest version of the online classroom management. To prepare for this, several CIEP instructors will attend training sessions in May and August to get ready. These workshops will teach us how to build an online course especially for our students. We'll learn how to use the programs and how to combine our curriculum objectives with this exciting new development. Many students can look forward to turning in homework and interacting online. Since many academic classes also use Blackboard, we hope we can prepare our students even more for the technological requirements of UNI courses. Also, some teachers are using new methods to edit and suggest revisions to student writing. Tom Reidmiller has used a digital camera and a microphone on his computer. When he uses them together with a recording program, he can give students a video of his reviews and comments. I am currently using a program called *Jing* that records the computer screen

Lauren Rein, CIEP Academic Support Assistant



and a microphone. When I use this program, it will make a copy of the action that is happening on the monitor. This way, students can watch a video of the teacher pointing out places for improvement. Students will have a copy of these videos that they can listen to again and again to improve their writing. We hope that in addition to talking to students face-to-face, this additional technological support will reinforce the instruction from teachers, as well as provide a new and interesting form of feedback.

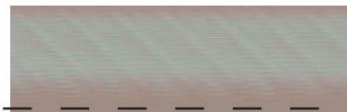
The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) is coming to the end of its academic year, and before everyone departs for the break, I would like to note CIEP's accomplishments and give thanks to our teachers and staff.

First, the CIEP was able to accomplish the hard work of completing a CEA (Commission on English Language Program Accreditation) accreditation application. This is no small feat as it involved the creation of a lengthy self-study report and changes to processes, policies, and procedures in CIEP so as to meet the standards set by CEA. In addition, the CEA received a visit from a group of three reviewers in February to interview students, faculty, staff, administrators, and examine our offices, files, classrooms, etc. In August, the CEA Board will meet in Washington, D.C. to make its final decision. Thanks to all the CIEP employees who worked hard to make this process happen including Tom Riedmiller and Petra Maier, who co-wrote and edited the final version of the self-study report. Thanks, too, to all the UNI faculty, administration, staff, and students who helped with interviews and information gathering.

In addition to the CEA accreditation work, the CIEP added new staff and offices. Staff additions included a new activities coordinator and secretary. Moreover, CIEP acquired new offices adjacent to its main suite of offices in Baker Hall. Through the work of Dr. Kurt Meredith, Assistant Provost for International Programs (CIEP's administrative parent) and Dr. Virginia Arthur, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, the CIEP was able to move into a suite of offices that included 4 staff offices, a library, a conference room, and common work area.

Finally, the CIEP has continued to improve its quality and standards through the hard work of teachers and administrative staff. Some met regularly on committees and in staff meetings, others did research, and all attended professional development opportunities. For some these professional development opportunities involved attending international and local conferences, for others it involved attending webinars and workshops sponsored by CIEP or UNI, and for all it involved learning and expanding their thinking in new ways. I am grateful to all the CIEP employees who improved the quality of the program this past year, and thus, improving services to our students.

From the Director:
Phil Plourde



Current Students

STUDENTS TAKE A TRIP TO AMISH FARMS IN KALONA

Sally Roos

CIEP Activities Coordinator

Paul lives a simple life on his farm in Kalona with his family, cows, and horses. He is a member of the Amish community—a group of conservative Christian farmers who live without electricity or other modern technologies in Eastern Iowa.

On Saturday April 23rd, students from the Culture & Intensive English Program visited Paul's farm. They also toured the Kalona Cheese Factory and ate a meal in a conservative Mennonite home.

The Mennonites have similar beliefs as the Amish, yet they do not separate themselves from the world as much or refuse to use modern technology.

"I was so surprised because I learned about Amish people and American culture," said Esmā Kose, a student from Turkey. "They were interesting because they were wearing different clothes than American people and they didn't use technology or cars."

Learning about Amish culture was a highlight for many students. Shawna Schrock, a CIEP conversation partner volunteer and native of Kalona, joined the group and was able to answer questions about the Amish on the bus ride.

Those who were brave enough to ask a question were rewarded with the opportunity to win prizes like CIEP t-shirts, cozy socks, a desk lamp and fruit pies. Shawna explained to the curious group that many Amish in Kalona speak a dialect of German and Dutch, go to school until the 8th grade when they stop to work on the family farm, and practice a type of Christianity that is not very different from other Ameri-



CIEP student, Hussain Allabbad takes a minute to pet one of the horses at the Amish farm.

can Christians. She also corrected stereotypes that Amish people don't use mirrors and marry multiple wives.

The tour guides and Amish man, Paul, gave the students more information. For example, Amish wear very plain clothing and bonnets for the women, who do not take on leadership roles except at school. Paul said he rides into town about once per week on his horse and buggy and it takes him about 40 minutes each way.



CIEP students sit down for a home-cooked meal while visiting the Amish farm.

The traditional foods prepared in the Mennonite home included homemade bread, homemade noodles, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad and cake topped with fruit. Students also had an opportunity to sample cheeses at the well-known Kalona Cheese Factory.

"Actually, I didn't like cheese," said SuJeong Seo, a student from South Korea. "But I changed my mind. I love cheese."

Before heading back to campus, CIEP students returned to modern technology, fashion, and foods at the Coral Ridge Mall in Iowa City to shop, ice skate, eat dinner and stretch their legs. Shopping continues to be a favorite activity for many students. They enjoy the opportunity to get off campus and relax!

CURRENT STUDENT PROFILE: XIAYANG FENG



Kelly Keegan, CIEP Program Assistant

New student , Xiaoyang Feng or “Yang”, began his CIEP studies in Iowa’s cold, harsh conditions this January. Coming from Ping Yuan, in northeast China, Yang soon noticed that the weather in his Chinese hometown was milder. He also noted the size of Ping Yuan is comparable to Cedar Falls but with a much higher population.

Yang came to UNI to earn his masters degree in Biotechnology. He knew he needed to improve his English skills before starting his master classes, so he enrolled in CIEP. “I am learning skills like how to take notes in the margins and the different styles of writing research papers.” Yang has had experience writing research papers in Chinese for his bachelor’s degree but is currently working on his

first research paper in English for his Writing and Grammar class. He admitted, “It’s difficult.”

The class work is without a doubt challenging, but Yang says he feels comfortable in the CIEP. Yang encourages international students who are looking to improve or prepare for their TOEFL test to join CIEP. “It will help your score,” he commented.

Outside of classes, Yang enjoys attending CIEP activities like Coffee Hour. There he likes to play classic American board games like Monopoly with other international and American students. He has also gotten involved with local churches and participates in singing, a bible study and dinner nights. Keep up the good work, Yang!

CONVERSATION PARTNER: SHAWNA SHROCK

I have been participating in the conversation partner program for about seven months and have greatly enjoyed getting to know quite a few international students. Within the first month of meeting regularly with my conversation partner I realized I had much to learn about not only other cultures, but that of the United States as well. Looking at U.S. culture from a different perspective has taught me a lot, and it makes me appreciate other cultures and languages.

It has been awesome hanging out with my conversation partner and other international students this year. As I have gotten to know many of them pretty well, we have become really good friends and I cannot imagine life at UNI without them! We have enjoyed doing a variety of things together, including going to movies, attending UNI sporting events, playing volleyball, going to CIEP events, and of course eating! I have been privileged to have them teach me much about their culture and even a little of their language. As a



TESOL major, I have also appreciated the chance to help them practice their English and assist them with their homework and study of the language. It has been fun trying to explain the meaning of our slang and discovering new things together. Honestly, I think they have taught me more than I have taught them and I have enjoyed every minute of it! It is hard to believe that just signing up to be a conversation partner has led to so many great friendships. I am really grateful for the opportunity to know all of them and I look forward to the summer and another great school year together!

This story was written by Shawna Shrock, a freshman Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from Kalona, Iowa.

Welcome New Students!

Ammar Alabadaljabar
Khalid Albughubar
Ali Hamad Alghubari
Hussain Ahmed Aljishi
Majeed Aljubaili
Murtadha Allabbad
Ali Almasoud
Fatimah Almasoud
Hussain Almuallim
Ayidh Alotaibi
Ali Alqahtani
Meshal Alqahtani
Mohammed Alqahtani
Amin Alradhi
Ahmed Al Rebh
Hassan Alsatrabi
Abdullah Al Shaddi
Mohammed AlSlamh
Amer Althiyabi
Mubarak Alyami
Nouvel Al Zaher
Hawra Alzayer
Ismail Coskuner
Xiaoyang Feng
Jacinta Kimani
Lina Liu
Lara Okicki
Britina Rokka
Sujeong Seo
Lu-Chia Wang

Mohammed Alabdulaaal
Hassan Alsaeed
Ahmed Alswiket
Bulent Sengun
Haihang Shi
Shuai Wang
Reda Ali Albouri
Nashmi Albughubar
Hassain Alhabeeb
Arwa Aljahdali
Fatimah Alkhidir
Zahra Alkhidr
Shehab Almohsin
Mahdi Alrebh
Sakinah Alrebh
Mohammed Alshakhuri
Mohammed Alsinan
Hassan Alyousif
Amer Al Zaher
Zahrah Alzayer
Quang Nguyen
Yedig Zhao

Spring 2011 CIEP Cultural Activities Included:

Girls' Night at LaJames

Trip to Kalona, Iowa

International Friendship Potluck

Pizza Party

Coffee Hours

Culture Talks

Maple Syrup Festival

African American Read-In

Sundown Mountain Ski trip in Dubuque

Class Exchanges

Progressive Dinner

RSVP Ice Cream Social

Team Building Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service



CIEP students try out their skiing skills during a trip to Sundown Mountain in Dubuque, Iowa.



CIEP students support their fellow Panthers during the basketball season.



Once a year, students participate in the Read-In project where students get the chance to read to local elementary students.

Each semester, CIEP students meet with academic students and discuss differences in culture as part of class exchanges.



CIEP ACTIVITIES

During the Maple Syrup Festival, students had the opportunity to learn about making syrup and got to interact with the reptiles at Hartman Reserve.



Every session, CIEP offers students a variety of activities outside of the classroom. Students are given the opportunity to visit local farms and businesses, attend parties with American students and families, play board games, make pizza, and improve their English skills.

CIEP students partnered with several UNI students to make homemade pizzas at the Wesley Foundation



On January 29, students participated in a team building day consisting of leadership activities, panel discussions with former CIEP students and UNI staff, and group discussions on culture.

Former Student PROFILE



**& Shareefah Alhashem
Ahmed Alhashim**

**Imagine being the
only student in your
College Reading
and Writing class to
receive *full* points.**

Now imagine you are an international student, outscoring all your native English-speaking classmates. How great would you feel? Just ask former CIEP graduate, Shareefah Alhashem, because that is her story.

Shareefah and her husband, Ahmed Alhashim, decided to come to Cedar Falls from Saudi Arabia over 5 years ago because both wanted to pursue degrees at UNI's well-known College of Business. And pursue they have.

After graduating from CIEP in Fall 2006 (Ahmed) and Spring 2007 (Shareefah), the couple has continued to be stand-out, successful students at UNI. Shareefah has long finished her writing class and will graduate this May with a double major in Finance and Graphic Design. She looks back on CIEP with fondness, "I liked learning about American culture in class, I liked the homework and I felt the teachers believed in us."

Having graduated last spring with a double major in Finance and Economics, Ahmed has now started his master's at Iowa State University. "You can't be successful at UNI without English. It's the basic," Ahmed said. He remembers the busy schedule of CIEP and encourages current students to take classes seriously. "There may be lots of work, but it's the way you learn. Also, take reading seriously. It's the most useful skill in academic classes."

In the far future the two hope to move back to Saudi Arabia to live and work. Best of luck with all your future plans!

Written by: Kelly Keegan, CIEP Program Assistant

CIEP ALUMN

Kelly Keegan,
CIEP Program Assistant

I would introduce you, but you have probably already met him. You may have seen him bustling around in the Union, his picture on the CIEP bulletin board, or his face flashing on UNI's website or other campus publications. "Mr. UNI" is what I like to call him, but you can call him Yaw Kyeremateng, CIEP alum.

Recently, Kyeremateng placed 2nd in the nation in Poetry Interpretation, performing about guns at the American Forensics Association's National Individual Events Tournament. "My focus was about how guns don't kill people, people kill people and I point out why that

"(CIEP) was definitely intense but I gained good writing skills, like how to write a research paper and how to research in the library that helped me later on."

happens."

Kyeremateng's raw talent leaves an impression on judges and audiences alike. To place 2nd at nationals is a highly esteemed accomplishment, one that forensics competitors long for. To top things off, Kyeremateng has also been asked to perform his poetry interpretation for Vice President Joe Biden at UNI this coming October.

Before his days as a speech star, Kyeremateng attended CIEP classes. Originally from Ghana,

CIEP ALUMNI

WINS NATIONAL FORENSICS AWARD

Kyeremateng came to UNI in Spring 2008 following in his older sister's footsteps. He joined CIEP's upper level Writing and Grammar classes to fine-tune his English writing skills before starting a full schedule of academic classes. He thinks back on his days in CIEP. "It was definitely intense but I gained good writing skills, like how to write a research paper and how to research in the library that helped me later on."

Kyeremateng liked the students he met in CIEP, the pleasant environment, and helpful teachers. "There were a lot of fun get-togethers and activities with conversation partners and stuff....I really liked those," he added.

Yaw's advice to CIEP Students:

"Study hard! ... and don't be shy to join student organizations... you can try new things, meet new people... and, it's fun!"

Kyeremateng is now in his final year at UNI with a double major in Health Promotion: Environmental Health Science and French. Besides being part of the UNI Forensics team, he is also involved in several other



on-campus organizations; African Union, SAVE (Students Against Violent Environments), Model UN, and French Club.

His advice to current CIEP students is to "study hard!" and don't be shy to join student organizations on-campus like the International Student Association (ISA), forensics or other clubs. "In the different organizations you can try new things, meet new people...and, yeah, it's fun!"

After UNI Kyeremateng plans to go to graduate school with hopes of coaching college forensics. The CIEP wishes him the best of luck in all his future plans!

Congratulations to our GRADUATES!

Heba Abualsaud

Home Country: Saudi Arabia
Current Plans: Finance/Business major at UNI

Salma Alshammasi

Home Country: Saudi Arabia
Current Plans: Biology: Biomedical major at UNI

Chuan He

Home Country: China
Current Plans: Manufacturing Technology major at UNI

Yi Jin

Home Country: China
Current Plans: Manufacturing Technology major at UNI

Man Lin

Home Country: China
Current Plans: Electrical engineering technology major at UNI

Qiang Liu

Home Country: China
Current Plans: Real Estate/Business major at UNI

Yang Yang

Home Country: China
Current Plans: Biology/Biomedical major at UNI

CIEP World's Window: Kenya

A DRIVE IN A STUNNING WILD ANIMAL PARK

Jacinta Kimani
CIEP Student

If you ever take a drive through the Amboseli National park in Kenya, it will completely stun you. As you drive on the uneven dusty road you will first see a wide expanse of land that stretches as far as the eye can see. During the dry season, this land is dry, arid and dusty. Most of the herbivorous wild animals will move long distances in search of grazing land. In the rainy season, the land is usually wet causing the dams within the park to increase their level of water. The river that runs across the park also trickles and flows with much more force. The swampland flourishes with fragrant vegetation and flowers.

During this time the vegetation is lush and green. On the side of the park, you are able to see a view of the majestic and famous Mount Kilimanjaro.

On a good clear day the snow capped tip of the mountain is visible. Then within the park, are different kinds of wild animals; the lion, elephant, warthog, wildebeest, hyena, jackal, zebra, buffalo and masai giraffe. Among these animals, the elephant is the most eye-catching of all. Next, around the park are different and rare types of birds to watch. Any bird watcher would find this a very pleasurable and interesting activity. When it is hot and dry, the air is still clean. There



is stillness about the park in the early afternoon. At this time almost all the animals are lying under the vegetation shade away from the hot sun. When it is wet and

humid, the air is pure and unpolluted. The place is peaceful, quiet, and serene. This is because of the location which is miles away from any civilization. It is a very good place to visit for relaxation and also for meditation. At the end of the day you see the most

“At the end of the day you see the most beautiful sunset that has various hues of golden sunlight and yellow skies.”

beautiful sunset that has various hues of golden sunlight and yellow skies. At the start of the day, you also see an amazing sunrise, and you get to watch it in the cool and quiet of the morning before anything stirs. The park has game drives that are scheduled during the early mornings and late afternoons to view animals around the park. In the center of the park is a five-star hotel that offers food, ac-

commodation, and recreation. Most of the rooms overlook the wild terrain that surrounds the hotel. At the hotel you can swim, play card and board games, or listen to music which is usually a live traditional band. One can also play some

indoor games. Also, available in the hotel are phone and internet services. A colorful and well-packed gift shop is at a corner of the hotel where people buy souvenir items and books. The

foods available on the menu of all the main meals include delicious and juicy meats. The food is spicy and tasty, yet the fruits are sweet and succulent. In conclusion, a visit to this park will not only stun you, but also be very memorable. I love this park because of the atmosphere and beauty that surrounds it.



This piece was written by Jacinta Kimani, a level 5 writing student. Her home country is Kenya. This is Jacinta's first year at CIEP.