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# INTERNATIONAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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## Director's Corner

**Dr. Richard Marcus**

Director, International Studies Program

We live in a time where it is increasingly difficult to distinguish what is local from what is global. The economic pains we feel here today are inextricably linked to financial collapse in Iceland, the dwindling middle class in Brazil, and the value of the Yuan in China. It has become clear that security at home is not just a function of U.S. position overseas but a function of the way people around the world constitute and reconstitute their own identities across ever-shifting personal, cultural, and transcendent international landscapes.

Faculty in other departments regularly comment on the soaring level of intellectual curiosity of our majors. International Studies students are required to become proficient in another language and to embark on the difficult task of drawing together theories that cross disciplines in an effort to answer the great questions of our time: Why are some countries rich while some are poor? Why are some countries more prone to conflict than others? Why do some identity groups have different experiences of immigration than others? Even

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## A New Addition to the Program: Dr. Julie Weise

**Alicia Albertson**

Senior

I had the pleasure today of sitting down with Professor Weise, the new member of the International Studies Program here at CSULB. First things first; she said that she is enjoying her time here so far and would love to see everybody in her office hours and in the new course she is excited about teaching in the fall, Migration and Modernity (I/ST 320I). She is also currently teaching I/ST 490 and will do so again in the fall.



*Dr. Julie Weise at the Tulum ruins in Mexico.*

Professor Weise grew up here in Los Angeles, then went to Yale where she did her undergraduate work in Anthropology and later her Ph.D. work in History with a focus on Mexican immigration. She definitely prefers living in Los Angeles to New Haven, as she loves the

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## From the Director

as this list of “whys” go on, students push forward in the quest for answers to “what” can be done about them.

International Studies has been driven by the increasing interest students have in learning about these vexing international issues of our time. Student interest has driven the program to grow by over 300 percent in just a few short years with no sign of slowing. At the same time the program has tightened its requirements, the percentage of students seeking multiple international experiences including study abroad, internships, short study courses, and intensive language programs has increased dramatically. The International Studies Program has also worked to answer the growing needs and desires. Prof. Julie Weise, a Latin Americanist and specialist on immigration issues, joined our faculty ranks. We began a tradition of a “new year” party at the beginning of the academic year and an awards banquet at the end of it, both to increase opportunities for interaction in the major. We have both tightened and diversified the course curriculum. We have increased the time and resources dedicated to student advising, particularly on study abroad and internships. We have opened more regularized dialogue with key partnering departments. We have collaborated with the Center for International Education to both increase opportunities for our students and serve students in other majors who have international interests. There are a number of other efforts in the works.

International Studies students always stand out at all colleges and universities but here at CSULB we stand out in unique ways. The International Studies Program is a product of our university and our multiple, overlapping communities. While students in International Studies are greater than ten times more likely to study abroad than students in other majors they are also nearly twice as likely to be foreign students themselves. We also have an unusually large number of students who come from one of Southern California’s diverse international communities and many of the students enter the program bilingual and bicultural. As a result of this demography International Studies at CSULB is not just about learning about how we interact with the world

but how the world interacts with us. We consider the ways in which we are Cambodian and American, Dominican and American, Somali and American, Japanese and American. We consider the interaction of our communities with their country of origin. Most students leave the program with a more profound understanding of the world and their identity in it and some of them return to international communities to serve disparate needs as cross-cultural facilitators in social, economic, and political milieus.

The growth of the International Studies Program, the intellectual fervor of its students, and the cohesion it finds in its diversity is a testament to all of you: the students, faculty, and public that have supported International Studies in recent years. I am deeply privileged that I have the opportunity to work with you all so closely. We have truly become an intellectual family – 180 strong and rapidly growing – and I get to wake up every morning looking forward to what I will learn from each and every one of you. Thank you.

## International Studies Student Association

The International Studies Student Association was founded in Fall 2008 in an effort to bring International Studies students, and other globally minded people, together. International Studies is by definition an interdisciplinary major, and while this helps create open-minded, well-rounded I/ST graduates, it makes it difficult for International Studies students to meet each other. Well now they can! Founded by seniors Krystal Burnett (see profile on page...) and Maggie Woods, the International Studies Student Association (or the I/ST club for short) provides a forum for I/ST students to discuss global issues, share travel and study abroad stories, meet interesting people, and of course have fun. Each meeting has a theme, based on a region of the world (ex. Latin America, Middle East), and students who are studying or have a special interest in this particular area are encouraged to lead a discussion for the group. The I/ST club also has a global and local community service component to it, and the club is currently selling hand-made (by I/ST students!) peace bracelets to support the organization *Invisible Children*. The International Studies Student Association has many events planned for this semester and hopes to get even more involved in the

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## Dr. Weise

diversity of big cities. Besides LA, she has a deep affinity toward Mexico City especially since she spent two years there after she got her Bachelor's. She saved up enough money to take off for Mexico and while there she worked for a newspaper for a while until she happened upon the opportunity to be a speechwriter for a cabinet member of Mexico's national government (Juan Hernandez, who taught at CSULB!). At 22, Prof. Weise saw points that she wrote quoted by Mexico's president and cabinet officials in newspapers.

Professor Weise is clearly accomplished, but also approachable and down-to-earth. I am looking forward

to learning from her and you should too! If at some point you need to bribe her, stop by Holé Molé for some fish tacos. Although she left us for a while to attend Yale, Professor Weise is obviously an Angelino - a veg-pescaterian who loves Mexican food.

## I/ST Association

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campus life as the club grows. Past events include: Practicing Peace Day, *Invisible Children* bracelet making party, Study Abroad Information Night (in collaboration with Dr. Weise) and the International Studies Potluck. A list of upcoming events is listed below. The International Studies Student Association encourages all I/ST majors to get involved and is always open to new people and ideas.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### LATIN AMERICA DAY

PLACE: TBD

TIME: APRIL 17, 2009, TIME TBD

A day focusing on Latin America such as the different cultures and current events.

#### KALEIDOSCOPE

PLACE: CSULB

APRIL 25, 2009 11AM-5PM

A festival to open up the University to the community, displaying the diversity of the campus.

#### ALUMNI CAREER DAY

PLACE

TIME: APRIL 28, 2009

International Studies alumni come and share their experience in the real world.

#### FIRST ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

PLACE: TBD

TIME: MAY 7, 2009 6:30PM TO 9:30PM

Mark your calendars the International Studies Program is proud to announce its First Annual Awards Banquet. More information to follow.



*ISSA members making bracelets to sell for Invisible Children*

Meetings are every other Wednesday at 5:30 in SSPA room 110.

Questions? Write to [istassociation@gmail.com](mailto:istassociation@gmail.com)

#### List of Officers

Chairs: Lindsay Duvall and Maggie Woods

Secretary: Valentina Mojica

Treasurer: Aly Hobel

Events Coordinators: Caitlin Dickerson and Katarina Elby

Publicity Coordinator: Kevin Nally

Community Service Coordinators: Coohunich

Partansky (Cookie) and Alicia Albertson

## Ready for the World: Krystal Burnet

**Caitlin Dickerson**

Sophomore, Western Europe

Krystal Windsor Burnet is an International Studies major emphasizing in Africa at CSULB. At only 23, Krystal has seen and experienced cultures vastly different from our own having been raised between the Philippines, Qatar, and Cambodia until the age of 12. Upon entering CSULB, Krystal chose to major in International Studies, and saw it as a way for her to put her knowledge and experience as well as her life's passion to use towards a degree. Krystal studied



*Krystal Burnet preparing dinner while in Masaka, Uganda*

abroad in Uganda, a riveting experience for her, which opened her eyes to the need for philanthropy. People often ask why she didn't choose to emphasize in South East Asia, having grown up there, but she felt particularly drawn to Africa stating "We're all from there, and the way our culture views Africa is systematic" in reference to the standardized Western view of Africa as underdeveloped and politically and economically stagnant. Krystal believes that Africa has been completely disregarded, but that they have the most potential for success and prosperity due to their abundance of natural resources, and diversity of influences from the countries of the world. Right now Krystal is interning for the Salvation Army as a Volunteer Program Intern. She left to study abroad in Senegal this March to finish up her last requirements before graduating, after which she has no definitive plans but hopes to get involved with another NGO

focusing on human rights. For fun, Krystal says she likes to do things that she has never done before because she has been able to truly see first hand how much people grow from uncomfortable situations that force you to step outside the box.

## Professor Profile: Dr. Bipasha Baruah

**Kevin Nally**

Freshman, Middle East

When asked about how she found her way to CSULB, Dr. Baruah explains that she found her way to CSULB in 2006 after completing her Ph.D. at York University in Toronto, Canada. While doing her post-doctorate work at the University of Toronto, she saw an ad for a joint appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Associate Director of the Center of India Studies. Dr. Baruah says, "I was impressed by the outdoor escalator here", saying that the idea of an outdoor escalator in Toronto would just be crazy – especially in the winter. She added that she really liked the diverse cosmopolitan student body at CSULB.

Dr. Baruah has worked in Canada, various countries in the Caribbean, India, and Indonesia on development projects pertaining to economic development and gender equality. "I never intended to end up in academia though," she said. "But all of my international experience I would rank very highly as personally and professionally satisfying," she said, explaining how she feels that her work and research abroad have made a positive impact upon the world.

I asked Dr. Baruah the very important question of "Do you consider yourself a grown-up?" and her immediate response was "Oh my gosh in some ways no. I hope not to be!" But then added, "depending on what that means, I suppose. I have a curious personality, and that is both an asset and a liability." She explained that she takes her work seriously, but then added, "taking myself seriously would be disastrous!"

I also asked Dr. Baruah about what type of music she likes, and the movies she prefers. "The questions I really like!" she said. "I really like urban music...hip hop, reggae, and Bhangra", Bhangra being the upbeat music from Punjab. "I hate country," she added, "but Wyclef Jean's Kenny Rogers fusion stuff is

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## Dr. Baruah

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interesting.” About the movies, she says, “I’ll watch anything, I REALLY like independent films though, the low-budget kind that are kind of wacky.”



*Dr. Baruah while living in the Caribbean*

I just had to ask her though, if she is good at math. Quickly responding, “I’m shockingly bad!” She explains that “In India, where I grew up, math and science education is very intense and competitive, I was a complete outlier, I really didn’t want to do it at all. This was deeply disturbing to my father who has a master’s in physics and mathematics, and I was just more interested in the world.”

I had to end the interview lightly, asking if she preferred Canada or the USA. “There are some areas Canada has done better in...but they’re very different and you feel it keenly when you have lived in both. Canadians are very eager to distinguish themselves from Americans...but I like the current US President much better than the Prime Minister of Canada.”

## Upcoming Student: Noor Salem

**Cookie Partansky**  
Senior, Middle East

The future is bright for Noor Salem, a junior double majoring in Political Science and International Studies. Noor started off her career at Cal State Long Beach with a single major in Political Science, an easy choice for her: “I would not have felt passionate about anything else.” However, she found, “the path to International Studies” through her experience working in the Study Abroad Office.

Noor’s work at the Study Abroad Office has exposed

her to a variety of people. “There is not one type of people that walk into the study abroad office. There are people with all sorts of backgrounds, and majors.” As a study abroad consultant she sometimes gives workshops on different opportunities that are available to students. If you are ever in the study abroad office attending one of Noor Salem’s workshops know you are in good hands.

Currently, Noor’s daily juggle is between studying, attending classes, participating in extra-curricular activities, and working at the Study Abroad Office. On top of this, Noor is also interning at the Norwalk Court House Resource Center, a center that provides help for those who cannot afford legal counsel in matters of family law. As an intern, Noor gives support information for people who are going through child custody battles and adoption proceedings, a job she finds very rewarding. In Noor’s minimal “spare time,” she likes to read up on current events, and enjoys inspecting issues from many different angles. She takes the time to read and thoroughly research a topic before making a final judgment. She also enjoys reading fiction, and her favorite book is *Snow* by Orhan Pamuk. She describes the book as “a novel about a political issue brought to life.”



*As an active student, Noor shows her support on campus.*

This summer, Noor is studying abroad in Amman Jordan as a part of the intensive Arabic program she is involved in through CSU San Bernardino. This

## Noor

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program lasts for 15 months: 12.5 months studying in the US and 2.5 months in an immersion program in Jordan. While in Amman, Noor will also be interning at an international organization. She is not sure where she will be placed yet, but she hopes to work at the United Nations office in Amman. Her words to describe her future trip abroad: "I'm super excited!"

It is obvious that Noor is a very passionate person and is interested in a wide range of issues. After graduation Noor is considering many options, two of which include working for a non-profit or becoming a lawyer. Whatever she does, Noor's past and future successes are perfect representations of her life's motto: "to take advantage of every opportunity."

## Outstanding Student in the College of Liberal Arts: Maggie Woods

**Dr. Richard Marcus**

Director, International Studies Program

It is my great pleasure to announce that Maggie Woods, one of the founding co-chairs of the International Studies Student Association, is recipient of the 2009 Outstanding Student in the College of Liberal Arts. Each year the college graduates approximately 2,200 students so this is no small accomplishment. Each department nominates up to two candidates and a college committee selects from this remarkable group of students. As chair of the department level committee that nominated Maggie let me take this opportunity to share some of the remarkable accomplishments that led to her nomination and, ultimately, winning of this prestigious award.

International Studies has two challenging auxiliary requirements: learning another language and studying abroad or completing an internship with significant international content. As a result, the majors in our program tend to be a highly motivated, self-selected group with diverse and interesting experiences. I/ST majors both have heavier requirements than other majors and hold GPAs significantly higher than the College of Liberal Arts mean. It is in this context that Maggie rose to the top.

Maggie is one of those students that does it all, does it

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all well, and does it all with boundless energy. She came to CSULB as a President's Scholar and will graduate CSULB with a 4.0. Some students achieve such a record by taking the easiest path. Not Maggie. While at CSULB Maggie enrolled in the Honors program, regularly took the maximum 18 unit load or even petitioned to exceed the limit, and studied abroad in Argentina for a year where she also volunteered and interned for six months in an after school program for children who live in the shantytowns of Buenos Aires. Maggie then embraced the very spirit of the International Studies program by using her diverse coursework, language skills, and international experience to write first a senior paper and then an undergraduate honors thesis entitled "The Challenges of Educating Children in the Shantytowns of Buenos Aires."



*Maggie Woods at the Tiwanaku ruins outside La Paz, Bolivia*

At CSULB Maggie took a heavy load, sung in the University Women's Choir, and was involved with the ASI Beach Team. She is currently a paid CFA intern and works at an environmental consulting firm. After providing years of student leadership in the program, in August 2008 Maggie and another industrious student, Krystal Burnett, came to me about forming an International Studies Student Association. I had long thought about this but never acted and thus it was very encouraging. I was particularly impressed that as graduating seniors neither Maggie nor Krystal would receive the long term benefits of their efforts. From the moment of inception I was impressed with the dynamism of this group. Indeed, other chairs and

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## Maggie

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directors around the College of Liberal Arts have taken notice.

Maggie hopes to work for a United Nations related development agency (such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or the United Nations Development Program) or a similar organization. She recently came to me expressing her desire to learn Arabic. The value of learning Arabic is clear. Yet, given UNESCO and UNDP mandates, surely Arabic will compliment her Spanish language skills in providing a skill set that will serve her on many mission types in diverse parts of the world.

Development personnel move every few years and these additional language skills will make Maggie a more diverse and valuable employee with the ability to transfer learning processes between Latin America and Middle East missions. I am a former development practitioner and still lead teams as a consultant. I can think of few students I have met in my years of teaching that show as much promise as Maggie to succeed in this field. I look forward to the day I walk into a UN mission office and find Maggie running a community education project.

I have had the good fortune of getting to know Maggie through my roles as a professor, an advisor, and a program director. In a recent email to me she wrote, "I really am proud to be an International Studies major, and I am constantly trying to recruit other students to

our major. This major, with all its amazing professors and students, is constantly inspiring me and has most definitely changed my life for the better."

I share Maggie's pride in the program but see us as very student driven. The success of the program thus is derived from the vast array of stunning and impressive accomplishments of students in this program. I am absolutely elated that the College of Liberal Arts committee saw in Maggie that which all of us in International Studies have long known: she is a shining example of everything International Studies has become and a student can be.

## Giving to the International Studies Program

Your donations allow the department to bring lecturers to campus, to put on I/ST related events, and to sponsor students for our annual Awards Banquet. We realize that in this economic downturn, money is tight, but any amount you have in your budget for us would be greatly appreciated. Please send checks addressed to the CSULB International Studies Program to:

International Studies Program  
California State University, Long Beach  
1250 Bellflower Blvd. MS-4065  
Long Beach, CA 90840-4605

## International Studies Students Abroad



*Sharon Abaud in Aix-en-Provence when the Christmas lights were first illuminated throughout the city.*



*Lindsay Duvall and her Chilean mother and sister in Cerro Concepción in Valparaíso, Chile.*