

Asia

extra

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 Washington University in St. Louis



Asian Students Off to a Good Start

by Nancy Belt

Students get to know much about the University before enrolling, but there's nothing like firsthand experience.

Ever wonder what it's like to move halfway around the world from Asia to become a freshman at Washington University in St. Louis, in America's heartland? "It's not as much a shock as one might think," says Menaka Piyaratna, Arts & Sciences Class of '06, from Sri Lanka. "Nearly everyone is familiar with American culture, especially its fashions, food, music, and movies." In addition, Piyaratna, like about half of the incoming international students, had been to the United States before. Her family had been to America on holiday several times and to take her older brother to college. Also easing the transition for

some were get-acquainted summer send-offs sponsored by the Alumni and Parents Admission Program (APAP) in Taipei and Singapore.

It also helped that, before arriving on campus, students could learn about Washington University online and, via e-mail, could contact older University students from their countries, and could send questions to staff, especially those in the Office for International

In Taipei, incoming and returning students enjoy a summer send-off barbecue for them and their parents, at the home of Niels and Christine Hansen.



Faculty Members Help Train Scholars in Mongolia

By going to Mongolia to help train junior faculty members at universities there, three faculty members from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work (GWB) have been proving that Mongolia is not so far away after all.

This past summer, Eddie F. Brown, associate dean and director of the Buder Center for American Indian Studies; Shanta Pandey, associate professor of social work; and Gautam N. Yadama, associate professor of social work and director of international programs for GWB; along with Nancy Morrow, an adjunct social work faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, led the first-ever summer institute in Mongolia for junior faculty in education, psychology, social work, and sociology.

These fields are relatively new in Mongolia, a developing nation in northern Asia, so,



Joe Angeles

Richard Harmon, Arts & Sciences Class of '04 (left), helps Aarin Yu, Engineering Class of '06, on move-in day.

Students and Scholars. "Washington University really kept in touch, more than other universities," Piyaratna says, "and their responses were very prompt, personalized, and friendly."

The friendliness of the University community impressed students even more, once they arrived on campus. Piyaratna says, "I know it's a cliché, but people here *really are* friendly and helpful, and that's been a very, very pleasant surprise." Nupur Agarwal, Arts & Sciences Class of '06, from Bombay, agrees that everyone has been very welcoming. She says, "Staff really helped me and my twin brother, Harsh, get settled into our respective rooms in Beaumont (Residence Hall)."

Also of great help to students and their parents, were orientation programs. Of the some 50 incoming undergraduate international students, *continued on page 2*

to help junior faculty at state and private universities there, four courses were offered during two weeks at a retreat site near the capital, Ulaanbaatar. Twenty-five students from 10 universities enrolled in the four courses offered—Action Research, taught by Pandey; Community Organization, taught by Brown; Social Economic Development, taught by Yadama; and Social Work as a Change Agent, taught by Morrow. Each course was offered for two credits.

"Mongolian scholars are eager to learn from the successes and failures of other nations as they try to dismantle a Soviet-style economy and discover a Mongolian model of sustainable development," Yadama says. The nation is sparsely populated, having 2.5 million persons in an area of one million square miles, an area slightly smaller than Alaska. About half the

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33 of them and 17 of their parents attended the Explore Campus and the Community Orientation Program, a program designed specifically for them, which preceded the general Orientation Program.

"It was really a long way to travel from Taiwan to St. Louis to attend the Explore program," says Chun-Hao Koo, "but the 23-hour trip was well worth it." His wife, Ming-Ru Liu, adds, "We enjoyed meeting other parents of new international students, getting a taste of academics at Washington University, and learning about the focus on students' health and safety." The two—parents of Jia-An Koo, Arts & Sciences Class of '06—each received a doctoral degree in the United States. They say the hardest part of the transition is not being able to see their son very often. For Jia-An, the biggest challenge is increasing his English-reading speed as he adjusts to different academic demands. "In Taiwan, students take 25 credits and have little homework," he says. "Here, I'm taking only 18 hours and I still may need to drop a course because there are so many exams, quizzes, and homework assignments." (In the photo of the Taipei summer send-off on page 1, Jia-An is in the front row, third from left.)

Freshman Menaka Piyaratna says, "I know it's a cliché, but people here really are friendly and helpful, and that's been a very, very pleasant surprise."

Parent Vinita Piyaratna says, "It's really hard to let go, especially from our part of the world where our children are a bit sheltered, but we live by the Buddhist philosophy, which encourages us not to cling."

Piyaratna's parents—Vinita and Sarath Piyaratna—also praised the Explore program. "When we saw the tremendous academic resources, flexibility offered, and the caring environment, we knew we had made the right decision," her father says. Her mother adds, "It's really hard to let go, especially from our part of the world where our children are a bit sheltered, but we live by the Buddhist philosophy, which encourages us not to cling."

Their daughter, Menaka, doesn't see many difficulties in becoming part of the Washington University community. "I even like the food," she says, "but I wish it were spicier." (Washington University has the best food among all colleges and universities in the United States, according to the most recent survey by *The Princeton Review*.) And as for St. Louis weather, she says, "I hate the cold, and, in winter, I'm really going to feel it."

Going away to college, whether it's near or far away, does mean adjustments—for students and parents. For half of the incoming international students, this was their first time in America. "The adjustment is heightened because of long distances between them and their families and major cultural differences between their homeland and the United States," says Tamilynn Holder, director of international alumni and development programs.

Agarwal says, "Initially, as I went walking in the

(Delmar) Loop one morning, there were few people around, and I felt lost because I was used to Bombay, which is bustling with people at all hours." Piyaratna says when she first went to the Explore orientation, she felt a bit alone since she was the only student there from Sri Lanka. But, very quickly, as the campus came to life with all students returning, they both got to know and recognize more and more people on campus, who greeted them warmly. Piyaratna says that process has been easier for her because her high school studies at an international school in Sri Lanka were in English, as opposed to studying only in Sinhalese. "I still have to ask for translation of slang expressions, though," she adds.

Both students are eager to get involved in campus life. Agarwal says she's interested in doing community service and in finding out more about student organizations. Both also were eager for classes to begin, to have an academic schedule again. Agarwal, who hopes, after graduation, to do graduate work in nutrition and food science, became interested in Washington University after her high school counselor recommended it. "High school counselors around the world are very aware of Washington University's high quality," Julie Shimabukuro, director of international recruitment for the University, says.

One thing is certain: Asian students, who comprise a large percentage of the some 1,200 international students at the University, are a vital part of University life. "Asian students enjoy outstanding academic, service, and social opportunities at Washington University," says Kathy Steiner-Lang, director of the Office for International Students and Scholars, "and they contribute brilliantly to the University's academic success and its vibrant, diverse community." ✂



Mary Butkus

Students enjoy themselves at the Community Fair, part of Arts & Sciences' graduate international students orientation, which provides general information helpful to international students.



Gautam N. Yadama

Leaders of the institute for faculty members of Mongolian universities included three Washington University social work faculty members. They are Gautam Yadama (far left), Eddie Brown (third from right), and Shanta Pandey (second from right). Others, from Mongolia's Center for Social Development, are (from left) Tungalag Chuluum; "Chimeg" Tserendorj, M.S.W. '02; Gantumur Radnaa; Naranchimeg; and Munkkhand.

population is rural, and, because young men usually are kept home to tend herds, some 70 percent of university students are female. Of the population, 75 percent is under the age of 35, and the nation's prime minister is 40. "The previous socialistic government strongly promoted population growth," says Erdenechimeg "Chimeg" Tserendorj, M.S.W. '02, who graduated as a Fellow in the Open Society Institute program, part of the Soros Foundations Network. "Now, because there is more concern for women and children's health, families are having fewer children."

For the institute, sponsored by the Higher Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute—Budapest, Tserendorj served as a translator/interpreter and resource person for Brown. This September, after living in St. Louis two years, she, her husband, and 11-year-old son returned to Mongolia. Now, she works for the Center for Social Development, a private organization in Mongolia that organized the institute and initiated it by contacting Washington University's Center for Social Development (CSD).

On the job, as she helps create the government's master plan for social development, Tserendorj is using practical training she did with the CSD, established by Michael W. Sherraden, the Benjamin E. Youngdahl Professor of Social Development. Now, she is exploring possible cooperation between the Mongolian organization that employs her and the Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development, headed by Shanti Khinduka, dean and the George Warren Brown Distinguished Professor for GWB.

Before coming to Washington University, Tserendorj was the United Nations' first specialist in Mongolia, working four years to organize volunteer efforts for women's development and national poverty alleviation. Earlier, after receiving a master's degree in electrical engineering from St. Petersburg (Russia) Electro-Technical University, she became interested in social work being offered through the National University of Mongolia.

"Mongolia needs to become less dependent on international aid—both financial help and outside expertise," she says. "We need to develop our own resources, so that we, and not the World Bank or other entities, are controlling our destiny." ✂

NEWS BRIEFS

Chancellor to speak in Hong Kong

Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton will speak at the University Presidents' Global Forum 2003, to be held March 24–25, 2003, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His topic will be "Use of Technology to Enhance Learning and Discovery at a Research University."

Song and Byun to co-host IACA meeting

Dr. Ja Song and Mr. Ho-Ki Byun have agreed to co-host the next meeting of the International Advisory Council for Asia in Seoul, Korea, from March 6–9, 2003.

Schiele joins IACA

James E. Schiele, A.B. '52, M.L.A. '85, consultant at St. Louis Screw and Bolt Company, has agreed to be an official member of the University's International Advisory Council for Asia.

Chen becomes university president

Zhangliang Chen, Ph.D. '87, a member of the International Advisory Council for Asia, has been promoted to president of China Agriculture University, in Beijing. He retains his position as vice president, as well as a lab, at Peking University, also in Beijing.

Chinese ceramics show in St. Louis

The School of Art is collaborating with Ichi Hsu, organizer of the "China Contemporary Ceramic Traveling Exhibition" to bring the show to St. Louis.

Yin receives NIH grant

Frank Yin, the Stephen F. and Camilla T. Brauer Professor of Biomedical Engineering, is researching engineering training in cardiovascular growth and remodeling through a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

Magneprint™ is passing test in Malaysia

In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, MasterCard International is testing the University's Magneprint™ system, an antifraud system invented by Ronald S. Indeck, the Das Family Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and director of the Magnetics and Information Science Center in the School of Engineering and Applied Science. The system is designed to detect counterfeit payment cards by reading the properties and orientation of the microscopic particles in a magnetic stripe.



Mary Burkus

Students and parents have many opportunities to get acquainted, especially at events such as Sunday Brunch during Parents Weekend, held yearly in October.

Alumni Clubs in Asia

Washington University's 11 Alumni Clubs in Asia offer alumni and parents of current and former students a way to stay connected with the University. The clubs sponsor activities and assist with admissions activities during the year. If you would like to get involved, contact the chairperson in your area, or contact:

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If you would like to know more about Alumni Clubs or other international alumni and development programs, please contact:

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The Alumni and Parents Admission Program (APAP) involves alumni and parents of undergraduates in recruiting, selecting, and enrolling students at Washington University. APAP members interview applicants, staff college fairs, and host receptions for admitted students. For information, contact:

Robyn Neuhauff

Director, Alumni and Parents Admission Program, and Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions
Washington University in St. Louis
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telephone: (314) 935-4826
e-mail: apap@wustl.edu

Alumni, parents, and friends of the University often help identify students who would benefit from a Washington University education. Refer names and addresses of talented prospective students to:

Julie Shimabukuro

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Major Grant Focuses on East Asia

Over the next four years, Washington University will offer many innovative activities focusing on East Asia, thanks to a recent \$1.3 million grant from the Freeman Foundation.

The grant program, titled Visiting East Asian Professionals (VEAP), will be multi-faceted, including bringing East Asian professionals to campus, supporting research assistantships for graduate students to work with them, covering travel and living expenses for undergraduate internships in East Asia, and supplying books and equipment for the East Asian Library. (Equipment will include two computers with browsers that can process Asian languages.)

"This major initiative will greatly enhance the University's ability to foster research, teaching, and learning about East Asia, an area of great importance to the world community," says Rebecca Copeland, associate professor of Japanese language and literature, and director of the program.

The program will bring visiting professionals and academics to Washington University to teach, lead workshops, and conduct collaborative research in Arts & Sciences, business, law, and art. The first guest is Nozomu Hakaoka, former senior editor of the *Oriental Economist of Japan*, who arrived in August for a two-semester visit. He will participate in undergraduate classes in Japanese language, International and Area Studies, and others in Arts & Sciences. The second guest, Tiao Manpeng, writer for *Common Health Magazine* in Taipei, Taiwan, will participate in classes in Chinese language, International and Area Studies, and political science. She will arrive in late September and stay until November. The third guest, Sang-Hun Choe, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the Associated Press, will be a guest lecturer in the East Asian Studies core seminar. He will arrive in early November, in time to participate in VEAP's inaugural events on November 9.

The events will feature Choe and several other outstanding journalists who are Asian nationals covering East Asia, as well as several top U.S. journalists who cover East Asia. Included will be Joyce Barnathan, A.B. '75, M.A. '76, assistant managing editor of *Business Week*, and a member of the University's International Advisory Council for Asia. A morning workshop will be limited to Washington University students and journalism students at universities in Missouri or nearby states, but an afternoon Public Forum, in the format of a roundtable discussion, will be open to the public at no charge.

For more details, visit Web site www.artsci.wustl.edu/~veap.

Looking for a Few Good Internship Sites

Short-term undergraduate internships in East Asia are part of the VEAP program. The Freeman Foundation grant fully covers the student's travel to and from the site, as well as living expenses in the given country for up to 90 days. The hosting organization or individual is to provide only the working environment and assist with locating housing. Most internships will be from late May through early August.

The selection process will be very rigorous, and each recipient will be acquainted with the culture and language of the host country and will be an excellent ambassador of Washington University.

If you or your organization might be willing to host such an intern, or if you have a site to recommend, please contact:

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glimpses

Mary Butkus

Many students modeled ensembles as part of a fashion show for parents during Parents Weekend 2001.



These students, part of the Connections group living in Small Group Housing, enjoy playing board games together, as well as joining other group members in planning programs and events promoting learning about cultural diversity.

Aakash Chandarana (left) and Greg Cook, first-year students in the School of Law, paint a sidewalk at Brittany Woods School as part of the Good Neighbors Public Service Project.



Mary Butkus



David Kilper

Yuan-Pin "Hermes" Chang, Graduate Business Class of '03 (right), and other students enjoy bubble tea, a drink made from tea, milk, sugar, and marble-sized tapioca balls, at St. Louis Bubble Tea shop in the Delmar Loop near the Hilltop Campus.