Recently, Thomas Friedman published a book entitled: “The World is Flat.” The primary point of the book is that changes in communications technology are leveling the playing field for global competition and creating extraordinary opportunities for the best and brightest minds around the world and least cost suppliers of inputs to be part of horizontal production and supply chains. The net effect, while somewhat breathtaking in its pace, should be to promote economic development and social progress throughout the world. There is a sub-text to the book as well. It is that there are three billion people in the world who are not part of this transformational phenomenon. Those left out include people in less developed areas of the world who lack the health care, educational opportunities, and/or economic and legal infrastructure required to benefit from these changes. The disenfranchised also include those in controlled societies and cultures that find meaning in past glories and few avenues to build upon dreams and aspirations.

At OSU, we recognize the opportunities and the challenges associated with the flat world Friedman writes about. In our new strategic plan we note that at Oregon State University we know our graduates are the most important contribution that we make to the future. We note that we must prepare them to be able to compete with anyone, anywhere in their chosen careers, and that their creative contributions and service to their communities, the nation and the world must be of the greatest possible benefit to others.

To achieve those goals we must provide our students with a richly diverse learning environment here on campus and in their studies, including opportunities to study abroad. We must reach out to students and scholars around the world and work with them both here and abroad to build friendships and faculty research collaborations. We must contribute to efforts to bring the three billion people who are not part of the global competition and supply chain into the flat world environment.

Our efforts are greatly assisted by our active study abroad program for our students and the extensive work of our faculty in every part of the world. We benefit too from the exceptional students and faculty from around the world who come to our campus to study, collaborate, and teach us about the broader world we live in. The International Students of Oregon State University, ISOSU, are a wonderful source of cultural exchange, friendship building, and international understanding, for faculty, students and staff who do not have the opportunity to travel abroad. They maintain an exceptional mix of programs throughout the year that enriches the lives of all of us on campus.

Our alumni abroad are among the strongest supporters of the university and many of them have been exceptionally successful in their careers. They represent our best ambassadors abroad. International alumni can tell their fellow citizens that university and business representatives associated with OSU are people one can trust, work with, and get results with, in business ventures.
Pavan Kumar Hanumolu did not see or touch a computer until he was 18 years old and studying at the Birla Institute of Technology and Science in northern India. One day a friend at the institute took apart a computer, showed Hanumolu a tiny chip inside, and described what happened within that chip. Hanumolu was captivated and knew immediately what he wanted to study.

Now 27 years old, he is a stand-out PhD candidate in the OSU School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science (EECS) where he recently won a highly-competitive and prestigious Intel Fellowship, one of only 35 awarded annually by Intel to students the company deems “the best of the best” at select U.S. universities. The fellowship provides a year’s tuition, a living stipend, a new Intel Centrino Notebook, plus an Intel mentor.

“Recipients of this award are typically from the top-10 universities such as Stanford, MIT, and Berkeley,” says Hanumolu’s advisor, OSU associate professor Un-Ku Moon. “This fact highlights Pavan’s exceptional potential. He’s an exemplary individual who brings prestige and recognition not only to himself, but also to our analog and mixed-signal program.”

Although Hanumolu now knows more than most people ever will about computers and the complex process of chip design, he is still in awe of the technology that drew him in the day he saw his first computer chip.

“It still amazes me how these things work,” he says, describing the highly complex nature of computer chips. “In fact, I'm amazed they work at all.”

Hanumolu’s dream is to one day apply his knowledge of chip design in the field of biomedicine. He envisions, for example, how bio-sensor chips will one day help diabetics wirelessly monitor their blood sugar levels and automatically administer insulin as needed.

“Biomedicine is an application of this technology that I think is very useful,” he says, stating that his ultimate goal is to improve the world.

At OSU, Hanumolu is researching ways to solve a thorny problem that plagues the entire computer industry. Although computer chips are faster than ever, the overall processing speed is determined by how fast data can be pushed back and forth along the lines that connect the CPU to the memory. This is also a problem on the larger scale of networked computers. These lines create a data bottleneck, sometimes causing data being pushed too fast to be altered. Finding a way around that is a challenge, Hanumolu says. But at OSU he is innovating creative chip designs that “outsmart” the problem by anticipating how data might be altered and reversing that action along the way.

“Oregon State has been an extremely good experience for me,” he says. “I have a lot of freedom, the people are very good, and the research is exciting.”

If you graduated from Oregon State with a degree from the College of Engineering, please consider updating your contact information with their alumni group as well. The website for the alumni page of the College of Engineering is:
http://engr.oregonstate.edu/alumni

The website for the e-newsletter from the College of Engineering is:
http://engr.oregonstate.edu/momentum/
IE3 Global Internships – a unique opportunity for Oregon students and alumni

In 1996, the Oregon University System received a $4 million federal grant to develop a unique international internship program. Although the grant that created IE3 Global Internships (or Global Graduates as it was then known) ended in 1999, the program is thriving. To date, over 1000 students have participated in 40+ countries.

IE3 stands for International Education, Experience, Employment – the stepping stones of a successful university career. Students realize that they need an international perspective and serious work experience to complement their academic training. Participation has been steadily climbing since 2001. An estimated 150 students will participate in an IE3 internship in 2005-06.

The interns who participate are some of the best, brightest, and most culturally sensitive students Oregon has to offer. They are screened for admission to the program by their campuses and by 4 regional directors who work with the organizations and companies overseas to determine the standards for internship placement. Many of the students have prior international experience.

Interns work in a company for a minimum of 10 weeks and some stay in their positions for up to a year. The projects they work on include product design, needs assessments, health education outreach programs and environmental studies. Interns are teachers, advocates, marketing assistants, and writers. They have worked for UNIFEM, Adidas, the Labour Party, the Cheetah Conservation Fund, and in Fulbright Offices and American Chambers of Commerce around the world.

The best internship situations (for both intern and organization) come from long-term relationships between the IE3 program and the host organizations. Alumni of the Oregon universities play a valuable role in building these relationships – both by identifying organizations in their home countries that would like to host an intern and by creating internship positions in their own workplaces. Oregon alumni have helped develop internships in Mexico, Ecuador, France, Chile, and Namibia.

If you are interested in having an intern from Oregon work in your organization, please contact the IE3 Global Internship program (ie3global@ous.edu). The regional director for your area will follow up with you and answer any questions you have. You can also learn more about the program on our website: http://ie3global.oregonstate.edu.

by Natanya Desai

OSU intern Michelle Bacon helps move a cheetah to a table for a check up at the Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia.

OSU intern Toni Flitcraft holds a wombat during her internship in the Fulbright office in Canberra, Australia.

COAS Alumni Profile
Marine Resource Management
Alejandro Clement

Alejandro Clement is an accomplished businessman running his own environmental consulting company in his native Chile. He attended the Marine Resource Management (MRM) program in the late 1980’s and was one of the pioneers in satellite imaging to monitor harmful algae blooms off the temperate Chilean coast.

“My participation in the MRM program and, in particular, a North Pacific cruise allowed me hands-on training with the latest cutting-edge technology,” he said.

The MRM program also gave him a strong background in biological, physical, chemical and geological oceanography, which he later incorporated with his technical skills to understand near-shore applied bio-oceanography, management issues and resource economics.

This fundamental background in a variety of fields allowed him to do academic work at the University de Los Lagos in Chile as a staffmember and researcher on harmful algae bloom. After working for the university for more than seven years he decided to start his own consulting company on harmful algae blooms effects on salmon and mussel aquaculture.

“The two issues we focus on are techniques, mitigation and environmental assessment, which include improving the technical side of circulation within the salmon and mussel farms and then assessment of water quality for government permits,” he said.

Reprinted with permission of the College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences.
Expanding Horizons at the English Language Institute

by Deborah Healey

Summer is a great time at the English Language Institute (ELI). Our regular intensive English program is only eight weeks long, leaving five weeks to travel around Oregon and the United States. Like summer at OSU, summer at the ELI is a smaller program, so students get even more individual attention than usual. In addition to the intensive program, we have several special groups this summer, three for teacher education and three for language and culture (study abroad).

The Pakistan Teacher Education and Development Program group of 20 English as a Foreign Language teachers. They were at OSU for four months and just headed home August 31st. Their project, funded by the Academy for Educational Development, is a cooperative project with the ELI and the College of Education. The Pakistani educators gave a very successful presentation at the Corvallis Public Library about various aspects of Pakistani culture.

Our smallest program, the Tunisia Oregon Project, consists of six Tunisian faculty here for just over two weeks: two librarians, two English teachers, an economist, and a computer engineer. They are the second group of faculty to come to OSU as part of a two-year grant between three Tunisian institutions of higher education and OSU’s Valley Library, the ELI, Foreign Languages, and Environmental Engineering. Information exchange happens in three languages: English, French, and Arabic, making communication especially interesting. The third educator group consists of 20 secondary school English teachers from Mexico. They are at OSU for a month, collaborating with ELI faculty on new ways of teaching English. This is the third year of this project at OSU, funded by the Mexican Ministry of Education and Comexus. The teachers will go home to cities all over Mexico, having brightened OSU with bits of Mexican culture and taking back a bit of Corvallis with them.

The three language and culture programs arrived in mid-August: two from Meijo University in Japan and one from Toyo University in Japan. It was the ELI’s fifth year with Meijo and 22nd year with Toyo University. These programs are designed to enhance the students’ language ability while providing a welcoming introduction to American culture and university life. Students generally have classroom study in the morning and community activities in the afternoon. A weekend homestay with a family gives them another perspective on America. We will have a total of nearly 50 students across the three programs. Even though these language and culture programs are short, they still have a big impact on the students, their teachers, and their homestay families.

All of us at the ELI enjoy our interactions with students and our teaching colleagues from elsewhere in the world. We also very much like seeing our former students – do drop by if you’re in Corvallis. If you want a copy of the ELI’s Alumni Newsletter in either paper or PDF format, please email deborah.healy@oregonstate.edu to be put on our mailing list. Tell us what you’ve been doing since your time at the ELI and read about your former classmates!

OSU Professor Visits with Thailand’s Prime Minister

by Brad Cardinal

Dr. Brad Cardinal of Oregon State University’s Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences presented a paper on “Olympic Education in the United States” to the National Olympic Committee of Thailand. Cardinal’s presentation was arranged by Dr. Supitr Samahito, an Oregon State alumna and Executive Member of the National Olympic Committee of Thailand. Following the presentation, Cardinal and Samahito were invited to a welcome party being hosted by Thailand’s Prime Minister, Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra. The party was held at Government House on August 24, 2005. The welcome party was primarily for the returning athletes from the 23rd Summer World University Games (2005 Turkey Universiade) that were held August 11-21, 2005. Thailand finished 31st out of a total 140 countries at those games, with individual Thai athletes earning gold, silver, and bronze medals.

While at the welcome party, Cardinal congratulated the Prime Minister on Thailand’s success during the 2005 games, wished them well for a successful 2007 Games, and presented him with a copy of the OSU Press book, Contemporary Northwest Writing edited by Roy Carlson. In 2001, Cardinal served as the U.S. Representative to the International Olympic Academy in Olympia, Greece. That is where he met Samahito, who was Thailand’s Representative to the International Olympic Academy that same year. Prior to serving as Prime Minister, Shinawatra was on the Board of Trustees at Kasetsart University, where he met Samahito, who was then Vice President for Advancement at Kasetsart.

The “Universiade Bangkok 2007” Games, which will be held between August 8-18, 2007, were also officially announced at the welcome party. It is anticipated that 9,000 student athletes from 170 countries will participate in these games. The Prime Minister personally invited Cardinal to return to Thailand to attend the games.
Sandra Macias Del Villar, was chosen from a pool of 30, for the Woman of Distinction Award for her dedication and work in the community.

From a pool of 30 applicants, one woman stood above the rest for the 12th annual Jo Anne J. Trow Woman of Distinction Award. That woman is Sandra Macias Del Villar. A senior in international business and management with a minor in French, Macias Del Villar was chosen for her numerous examples of leadership, dedication to diversity awareness and volunteer work in her community.

Macias Del Villar is well known by her peers for the on-campus activities and clubs with she is affiliated. She is the Leadership Council chair of International Students of OSU and the University Global Relief Fund. She holds the title of president for the Association of Latin American Students. Del Villar has volunteered her time as a mentor for PeaceJam and devoted countless hours to European Night, Vietnamese Night, HMONG Night, “Let the Games begin ... International Sports Showcase” and the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration 2005.

In addition to all of these events and organizations, she also works in the MU Business Office and is a full-time student. Even though she doesn’t feel challenged academically, Macias Del Villar feels she has created challenges for herself through her many extra-curricular activities.

“What I’m struggling (with) the most is balancing all the things that are going on in my life right now ... on top of all this is school, and I always take 15 credits or more, so it is an extreme challenge that I’ve put myself through,” she said.

Macias Del Villar definitely notices a maturation in her character since she first came to the university.

“I am definitely not the same person I was a couple of years, or even months ago,” she said.

“I have gained a significant amount of respect for others, extreme appreciation for our world’s cultures and an eagerness to continue to educate others about the world, assist people and work toward a better change for our future and our society.”

Born in the town of Tulancingo, in Hidalgo, Mexico, Macias Del Villar enjoyed an extended family of 25 cousins. Her immediate family, however, is much smaller.

She has a 10-year-old sister and a 5-year-old brother. Both of her parents and siblings live in Denmark, where her father is a computer science professor.

“My dad is an engineer, so he is not the social part of me,” Macias Del Villar said. “Rather, my mom is the one that always brought a lot of people to the house, and she was constantly making events to gather people and celebrate just about anything.”

“My number one inspiration is my mother,” she said. “She serves as my main inspiration to continue fighting for what I want and never give up.”

Another role model of Macias Del Villar’s is the Novel Peace Laureate Jodie Williams, whom Macias De Villar met at this year’s Peace Jam event.

“She really inspired me to keep going because she started like me, being active in her college, and little by little opportunities rose and now she is extremely active and world renowned ... She gave me hope that I can be somebody,” she said.

Macias Del Villar is immensely thankful for the variety of clubs available to OSU students.

“Without (the clubs), I wouldn’t have achieved anything at all, and I wouldn’t have become the person I am today,” she said.

“‘It is extremely important to become an active member not only at OSU but (in) your community, in general.”

“I would tell any new student that they should go to Student Involvement or the MUPC and try to find a club you feel you can belong to, no matter what it is, because within that club you can make a change,” she said. “And that is what is most important.”

Quoting Gandhi, Macias Del Villar said, “we need to become the change we want to see.”

Macias Del Villar is graduating after summer term and she hopes to attend an East Coast graduate school.


Crossroads International Picnic

The Crossroads International annual spring picnic was held May 7, 2005 at Avery Park in Corvallis, and was another roaring success. The event brought together many students, scholars, community members and volunteers in an annual event enjoyed by all. More than 175 attendees brought food to share, roasted hot dogs, made s’mores (dessert treats), and participated in games and activities. The ‘adventurous’ played games taught by Crossroads volunteers, including a water balloon toss, and some international students led games, played drums and gave musical and dramatic performances.

Crossroads International was founded more than 30 years ago by community members interested in helping international students and their families feel at home in the community. In 2004–2005, more than 117 students and scholars, and 58 spouses were served by Crossroads’ Home Stay, Friendship Home, Conversation Partner program and the Conversation School for Women. Funds for Crossroads’ programs are raised through private donations and Conversation School tuition fees.

Alumni of OSU are encouraged to participate in Crossroads programs or donate to Crossroads to help us keep our programs running. They are a vital part of the OSU and community experience for many students, scholars, and their family members. Our aim is to make a difference in the lives of those international students who visit OSU and Corvallis.

If you have any questions about Crossroads, please contact Dawn Moyer, Director, Crossroads International, at dawn.moyer@oregonstate.edu

by Dawn Moyer

“Individuals Can Make a Difference” PeaceJam 2005 at OSU

Last March, Oregon State University hosted its first annual PeaceJam conference, a program designed to inspire a new generation of peacemakers who will transform their local communities, themselves, and the world. As the first and only university affiliate at this time, OSU welcomed more than 200 participants to the two-day event, including middle and high school students from Oregon and Washington, educators, teachers, youth leaders, more than 50 OSU student mentors, staff and faculty volunteers.

Originating in 1995, PeaceJam is a unique youth program that explores the topic of peace and encourages youth to learn to think critically about issues of violence both in our neighborhoods and abroad. This comprehensive program involves a flexible curriculum, two-day conference, community service projects, and the opportunity to meet one of 13 Nobel Peace Laureates who participate in PeaceJam.

The 1997 Laureate, Jody Williams, who is known for her extraordinary efforts in the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) addressed the group this past March as well as listened to students from surrounding schools as they described various service learning projects and peace building endeavors that they had designed and implemented in their own communities. In addition to the large group activities that took place in the Memorial Union, students had the opportunity to participate in one of eleven service projects in and around Corvallis (e.g., helping install playground equipment for children with disabilities at a local child care center and making origami paper cranes to sell as a fundraising activity for the Asian Tsunami Relief at OSU’s Asian Pacific Cultural Center). The conference also offered eleven workshops to choose from, including “Unpacking Your Own Story”, that explored diversity and oppression issues with Dr. Larry Roper, Vice President of Student Affairs and “Global Civil Society and the Individual in the 21st Century” with Cody Donahue and Dennis Dugan, both political science and philosophy majors at OSU.

On November 19, 2005 OSU will host a follow-up one-day “PeaceSlam” for area youth that will once again involve college student mentors. The objective of this fall’s PeaceSlam is to study the connection between peacemaking, community service and our environment. The keynote speaker will be OSU professor, Dr. Jane Lubchenco, who is an environmental scientist, ecologist and environmental activist.

Later this spring, on April 22 and 23, OSU will hold its annual PeaceJam two-day conference with 1992 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Rigoberta Menchu Tum, who is known for her work in the promotion of the defense of human rights, peace and indigenous peoples’ rights. The goal is to have 250-350 students from around the Northwest gather at OSU along with 50 OSU student mentors for an enriching and empowering weekend.

If you would like more information regarding PeaceJam at OSU, contact Ann Robinson at peacejam@oregonstate.edu

You may also find more information about the PeaceJam program by visiting www.peacejam.org.

by Julie Walkin

Area High School students present peace plan proposals to Noble Laureate and other attendeees
Take nine OSU students and faculty, 30 Taiwanese students and faculty, 50 indigenous children, two aboriginal tribes, three nuns, hundreds of large bugs, torrential downpours, and the constant sticky feeling that comes with incredible heat and humidity and what do you get? The experience of a lifetime, of course!

Program participants from the OSU College of HHS, Human Development and Family Sciences Department returned July 4 after almost a month of study in Taiwan. Our purposes were to collaborate on undergraduate class offerings with Fu Jen Catholic University (FJU), to share cultures, expose Taiwanese students to native English speakers, and to run an English Immersion Youth Camp for indigenous children. We did not just study and work with everyone involved, but we traveled, ate, shopped, and lived together for the duration of our trip.

Our first two weeks in Taiwan were dedicated to academics and furthering our understanding of the eleven Taiwanese aboriginal tribes. OSU/FJU faculty taught a class on individual, family, and community collaboration, and OSU/FJU students used these ideas to conduct research in indigenous villages. We were fortunate enough to be welcomed into the homes of two Taiwanese indigenous tribes, the Paiwan and the Rukai, and experienced and learned about many of their native traditions. After participating in a national governmental press conference in Taipei, it was clear that all members of this study abroad experience were part of a larger social change process to increase educational and employment opportunities for indigenous people that is occurring in Taiwan.

A large part of our time was committed to developing and implementing curriculum and activities for a three-day summer camp for aboriginal youth. Individual and community empowerment, English language development, and fun were the primary goals of the camp. It was a great success! Though many of the youth did not speak any English, we were able to communicate and teach through music, dance, food, sports, cooking, art, and drama. We learned just as much, if not more, than the camp participants.

Without a doubt the most rewarding aspects of the trip were the relationships and cultural awareness we gained. We left Taiwan after making great friends with FJU students and faculty, some of whom we will remain in contact with for the rest of our lives. The Taiwanese people are among the most generous and thoughtful in the world. As we traveled in a country different from our own, we gained a greater appreciation of ourselves. We were able to discover things we are capable of that we would never have learned by remaining in the United States.

In addition to the short-term program offered this summer, there is a term-long program beginning Fall 2006 led by OSU faculty member Liz Gray. OSU students and faculty will live and study required HDFS coursework through an international lens on the Fu Jen University campus in Taipei, Taiwan. It is a unique chance to study abroad and pay about the same amount you would pay if living at OSU, while not putting yourself behind in your studies. You will return right on track to graduate!

As lucky participants of the first group, the long-term program comes with our highest recommendation! It is an opportunity of a lifetime to learn in an exciting context, experience another culture, and make new friends … all while earning credits just like you would if you were in Corvallis.

Students interested in participating in the year-long program beginning Fall 2006, should contact Dr. Liz Gray at the following address: grayli@oregonstate.edu

By Chelsea Terrall and Dr. Liz Gray, Human Development and Family Sciences

OSU and FJU University study abroad students visit with Taiwanese Indigenous dancers at the Jender Cultural and Educational Center in southeastern Taiwan.
The road to Hollywood is paved with homicidal thoughts. At least, that’s how screenwriter Stuart Beattie got there. Sitting in the back of a Sydney cab, Beattie entertained an unconventional idea. “It basically occurred to me sitting in the back of that cab that I could be anyone, even a homicidal maniac,” Beattie recalls.

Fourteen years later, Beattie is one of Hollywood’s most wanted screenwriters. In 1991, as a college student, he transformed his homicidal thought into a script. Then in August 2004, the idea became a reality when Tom Cruise and Jamie Foxx starred in the film Collateral.

“It was just a great screenplay,” said Cruise, who plays a contract killer that hijacks a cab in the film.

Collateral was received well by both audience members and critics. According to Entertainment Tonight correspondent Leonard Maltin, Cruise made the right choice when he picked the Beattie script for his breakout bad-guy role.

While inspiration for Collateral came in a Sydney taxi cab, the real work was done at Oregon State. In fact, Beattie wrote both Collateral and Pirates of the Caribbean as an exchange student in the College of Liberal Arts at OSU in 1992. He remembers chucking a Frisbee back and forth with a friend near Weatherford Hall and coming up with the idea that led to Pirates of the Caribbean.

“We wanted to write a movie together and were thinking of what kind of movies hadn’t been done in a long time,” Beattie remembers. “We basically went through the list until we came to pirate movies and there hadn’t been a good pirate movie since Errol Flynn.”

OSU EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

The OSU International Programs Office provides many opportunities for OSU students to study abroad and for OSU to receive international exchange students. Our partner institutions send talented students to OSU, such as Stuart Beattie, who add an international dimension and perspective to our classrooms here.

Stuart Beattie attended Charles Sturt University, a regional school in New South Wales, Australia. CSU is known for its strong communication program and its hands-on approach to real-life applications in many fields of study. Since the exchange program began in 1986, approximately 100 OSU students from a wide variety of majors have studied at Charles Sturt, and about 50 Australians have come to OSU.

OSU students can choose from over 60 different study abroad options as well as numerous international internships. One of the most exciting aspects of these programs are the international students they bring to the OSU campus.

Making the Grade on Hollywood’s A-List

A year and two scripts later, Beattie relocated to Los Angeles where he attended UCLA Extension screenwriting courses. “I worked during the day on campus, took classes at night, and wrote in-between,” he recalls.

Beattie’s nudge toward Hollywood came when he won the prestigious UCLA Diane Thomas Award for a screenplay entitled Mayday. The film never got made, but it did get Beattie work. “Winning awards are good ways to get around the catch-22 of you need an agent to get work, but you can’t get work without an agent,” said Beattie. “You need someone else saying that you’re good, or your screenplay is good, other than your mother.”

Beattie admits that being a screenwriter is a difficult job with a variety of challenges, but also states that “it’s the best job.” His next film Derailed is a drama/thriller starring Jennifer Aniston and is due out in May 2005. He also has two or three more projects in the pipeline, including a deal to direct an upcoming film. “Seeing the audience react, absolutely hands down, that’s why I do this,” he states.

If you’d like to include an update about yourself, please submit information to:

http://oregonstate.edu/international/oie/faculty-data/Summer_2005_IP_Alumni_Update_Page.html

by Heather Bené
The stage was set, the backdrop was painted, the swords and shields were cardboard. But the story of Lapu Lapu, a legendary hero in Philippine culture, was told with heart and humor. As guests at Pilipino Cultural Night looked on, the character of Lapu Lapu fought against the Spanish explorer Magellan, who threatened the freedom of Lapu Lapu’s people.

Pilipino Cultural Night (Filipino is spelled with a “P” in Tagalog language) took place Saturday in a packed MU Ballroom. It was organized and presented by Isang Bansang Pilipino (IBP), OSU’s Pilipino student association.

“We’ve been planning [tonight] since pretty much the beginning of the year,” said Anton Ricafort, president of IBP and a student in civil engineering.

Lapu Lapu’s journey, wryly set to the soundtrack of the video game “Halo 2,” took him through death, rebirth and trials leading to the coconut’s arrival on the Philippine archipelago. Through legend, the coconut was considered a divine gift and an invaluable part of Philippine culture.

Dialogue was read by the evening’s hosts from off stage, giving the skit the feel of a dubbed martial arts movie with characters gesturing comically on stage to draw laughter from the audience.

As the night’s program played out, it was clear that those putting on the show were having fun, and the audience eagerly jumped on for the ride.

Ricafort said IBP wanted to keep the evening casual so people would have a good time. Even the selection of food for the evening -- Java rice, pork barbecue skewers, pancit (stir-fried noodles) and tropical fruit salad -- was meant to convey the festive atmosphere. “Every time Filipinos have parties, this is what you’d eat,” Ricafort said.

The evening also featured a variety of cultural dances from the Philippines that reflected the island traditions, as well as the cultural influences of the Spanish.

Ricafort said the dance troupe that performed was “Lahing Pilipino” or “Filipino Heritage.” “They’re really impressed with the performers,” Ricafort said. He said his biggest fear was that people attending the free event would simply eat and leave. But the tables stayed full for the entire evening.

The theme for the evening was “Halina’t Magdiwang!” which translates to “Come and celebrate!” Ricafort said. For the evening, the ballroom was decorated in the colors of the Filipino flag: yellow, red and blue. “The Philippines is a country of many celebrations,” Ricafort said.

Seated closer to the stage by the deejay turntables were Ida Leonardi, a student in business administration, and Chelsea Dudoit, a student in fisheries and wildlife. Both from Hawaii, Dudoit and Leonardi said homesickness was part of the reason they attended the evening event. Filipino culture is part of life in Hawaii, along with many other cultures, and the two said the evening made them feel a little closer to home. “[The food] was really good,” Leonardi said. “It reminded me of home.”

For the members of IBP, the evening was a highlight for the year, a chance to show their culture and heritage to the OSU community, Don Ortega said. He and Nicole Crebillo were emcees for the night.

At the conclusion of the evening, members of IBP took the stage and danced to a hip-hop montage. After what Ricafort described as sleepless nights and hard work, the audience before them cheered wildly. And as the beat busted out, a sound byte from the movie “Spaceballs” echoed in the MU Ballroom. “Ludicrous speed, go.”

by Peter Chee and Jennifer Mooser, reprinted with permission from The Daily Barometer
International Alumni

1970’s

Michel G. Lejeune
France
Graduated: 1975
Major: Statistics
Degree: PhD

I am currently a professor in statistics at the university of Grenoble-2, France.

1980’s

Theophil Rwebangira
Tanzania
Graduated: 1988
Degree: Ph.D

I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Transportation & Geotechnical Engineering of the University of Dar es Salaam. My responsibilities include teaching of undergraduate and graduate courses in civil engineering as well as research in Transportation engineering. I am also a director in a consulting firm dealing with transportation engineering issues.

Doug McNeill
Originally born and raised in Calgary, Alberta
Graduated: 1982
Major: Mechanical Engineering
Degree: BS

Presently working in Calgary, Alberta, Canada for an oilfield equipment manufacturer based in Edmonton, Alberta. This is a private company that was established in 1962 and continues to be privately owned by the same original owner. The company has 526 employees and international offices in Houston Texas, Kilgore Texas, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and Jakarta Indonesia. I am in my 18th year with this company and am the vice president for business development.

1990’s

Arun P. Madangarli
India
Graduated: 1993
Major: Control Systems
Degree: MSEE

I work as a senior development engineer doing applied R&D in discrete manufacturing control and development of bearing inspection systems with Timken Corporation, the third largest bearing & steel manufacturer in the world.

Yenni Merlin Djajalaksana
Indonesia
Graduated: 1998
Major: Business
Degree: MBA

I am currently the Dean of Information Technology Faculty at Mara-natha Christian University, Bandung, Indonesia. I lead a Faculty that consists of three study programs: IT Diploma Program, Informatics and Information Systems.

Thanat Moungkeow
Thailand
Graduated: 1998
Major: Mechanical Engineering
Degree: MS

Currently, I am working as a Reliability Engineer in Polyethylene plant at Siam Polyethylene company; the JV company between Siam Cement and The Dow Chemical Company, in Thailand. I have been working here since 1999, 6 months after graduating from OSU. My job is basically to take care of all equipment hardware reliability and maintenance, resolve the major hardware issues and control maintenance cost for the company.

2000’s

Jenny María Gavilánez-Slone
Ecuador
Graduated: 2000
Major: Entomology
Degree: MS

I’m a biological Science Aide in the Chemistry Unit at the USDA-ARS Center for Medical, Agricultural, and Veterinary Entomology (CMAVE), assisting with experiments on the Small Hive Beetle, which is an emerging major pest of honeybees. We are developing and testing traps with attractants to control this beetle, and identifying the pheromones involved in attraction and mating.

Panida Pongviratchai
Thailand
Graduated: 2002
Major: Food Science and Technology
Degree: MS

I am currently a Food auditor in Food Audits International, Limited. This company is located in Bangkok, Thailand; however, we do service for several countries especially in South East Asia.
Ernesto Rodolfo Wagner  
Chile  
Graduated: 2002  
Major: Forest Products  
Degree: PhD  

I am now working in International Business and Trade between North and South America. In particular, wine and wood products from Chile and other South American countries which are sold into the US and Canada.

Josephine Julia Fletcher  
England  
Graduated: 2003  
Major: Biology  
Degree: BSc  

I am currently doing my MSc in Exercise Science and Nutrition at the University of Chester, England. I am also playing football for Birmingham City and England Women. In September I begin training to be an army officer at the royal military academy at Sandhurst (with Prince Harry).

Susan Carol Scharffenberg  
USA  
Graduated: 1990  
Major: Horticulture  
Degree: PhD  

I moved to Thailand in 2001 to chair the Biology Department at Mission College. Mission College, an international university located about 150 km northeast of Bangkok, offers programs with instruction in both English and Thai. In 2002 I became the Dean, Faculty of Science with responsibility for the sciences for the International Program and in 2003 the Thai medium science courses were also added to my job description. I am enjoying the challenge of this position. We rely on retired or sabbatical volunteer professors to supplement our teaching faculty. If any alumni are interested in joining us for a semester or a year to teach science or courses in other disciplines, please contact me.