GOING AROUND THE WORLD FOR ISP AND COC!

ISP Director Dr. Cheng-Levine Travels the Globe

This fall semester saw International Services and Programs office (ISP) Director Dr. Jia-Yi Cheng-Levine continue with her long and proud tradition of crisscrossing the globe in search of new students and untapped opportunities for ISP and the whole COC family! She was accompanied by other members of the ISP staff for each of her trips, which were undertaken as part of the office’s larger mission in three major areas: advancing COC’s reputation for excellence in learning throughout the world; contributing to the US government’s diplomatic mission of promoting the national interest through world peace and international cooperation by meeting with US Embassies abroad and engaging in ‘educational diplomacy’, the use of higher education to build greater intercultural understanding; and giving hope and opportunities to international students who have talent and a desire to better themselves, but lack the educational infrastructure to achieve their goals, by giving them the chance to attend COC, an accredited college that offers certificates and the opportunity to transfer to an American 4-year institution of higher learning and opportunities.
In late September Dr. Cheng-Levine visited Western Europe with Ms. Anh Nguyen, an ISP counselor. They participated in events in Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and France. Portugal was perhaps the highlight of their time in Europe, as they had the honor of attending a reception at the US Embassy in the capital of Lisbon, which included briefings with educational officials from the Embassy and remarks by the US Ambassador to Portugal, Robert A. Sherman. Their time in Spain saw them attend a welcome event sponsored by the US government and fairs held for students interested in coming to the US to study – precisely the kind of direct, person-to-person marketing that Dr. Cheng-Levine has pushed for in order to help the COC brand grow in prestige and reach! Their trip to the United Kingdom featured participation at the largest European college fair in Europe, while their journey to France gave Dr. Cheng-Levine and Ms. Nguyen the chance to meet with 21 universities.

In early October Dr. Cheng-Levine visited eastern Asia with Mr. Tim Honadel, ISP’s Assistant Director. Specifically, they visited Taiwan, China and Mongolia. In China, Dr. Cheng-Levine and Mr. Honadel recruited students at high schools that recently partnered with COC to develop a curriculum geared toward preparing local students for education abroad, particularly at COC. In 3 days, the ISP was able to make presentations to approximately 1,200 high school students at 3 schools. This year-long partnership has already been a tremendous success for both schools, and will continue to be so for many years to come as these Chinese students have begun coming to COC as of this Fall. As a side note, ISP has seen an increase in the Chinese speaking student population from 4 students in Spring 2015 to 28 this Fall.
Dr. Cheng-Levine and Mr. Honadel then proceeded to Mongolia, where they participated in a series of school visits and a college fair for prospective students. Mongolia remains an untapped nation of potential students who would be very interested in the chance to attend an accredited and yet low cost college in the US, and this trip represents a major first step toward establishing COC’s presence in that country. In Taiwan, our ISP representatives made two presentations to another 90 students at a prestigious high school where one of Dr. Cheng-Levine’s college classmates teaches.

Dr. Cheng-Levine and Mr. Honadel’s final journey this fall took place in late October and early November, taking them to Russia, Armenia, Ukraine, and Georgia. In Russia they were able to attend a series of briefings at the US Embassy and recruitment fairs in St. Petersburg and Moscow. While their time in Armenia centered on them participating in making presentations to academic counselors and recruiting at college fairs. From there, we learned our current ISP student Nerses (Nelson) Stepanyan had made presentations in August to interested students about his experience at COC. Dr. Cheng-Levine and Mr. Honadel soon after moved on to Ukraine, where they took part in similar activities and provided workshops to interested students and parents. Their time in Georgia saw them follow an itinerary similar to the one they had in Ukraine. It is estimated that during this Eurasia trip they discussed the opportunities COC has to offer to roughly 2,000 students in the course of 2 weeks.
ISA President Dana Samuel – Bio

ISA is led by its dedicated, President, Dana Samuel. Ms. Samuel hails from the island nation of Saint Lucia, located in the eastern Caribbean. She has been at COC for a year and is a Biological Science major. Among her main focuses now is leading ISA to success and leaving a positive, long-lasting impression on COC. She wants her legacy at ISA to be about making a real, meaningful difference for the international student community. She is also featured on ISP’s “I Am COC” Video, which Dr. Cheng-Levine has been showing across the globe!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP_FIKGAk3U

International Students Association

Besides the staff at the International Services and Programs office (ISP), one of the most valuable resources COC has to offer specifically for international students is the International Student Association (ISA). ISA is a student club that is open to any student at the COC campus. The club’s central goals are to provide a common space for international students to come together and share their feelings, fears, experiences, and aspirations, and to provide comfort and the opportunity for socialization. Its mission is to create an atmosphere where international students from all over the world can feel like they are a part of something great, while also making a difference for future students. One major challenge that many students coming to the US face is difficulty with making friends; ISA is here to help make that just a little bit easier!

ISA is currently looking to attract more students so that it may advance its larger mission and, in the short term, promote the club as a place to come together and have fun! It plans to work toward further integrating itself into COC club life, begin holding informational meetings for students or any students who wish to learn more about people and cultures from every corner of the world, and wants to make itself into the go-to place for international students. ISA also wants to start hosting fundraisers to build up its treasury, which in turn will be used to finance exciting excursions, such as trips to historical locations.