



# INTERNATIONAL CENTER *Connection*

The Official Publication for Alumni and Friends of the FSU International Center

Fall 2003

## From the Director

I hope you enjoy this second edition of the IC Connection. Please share it with family and friends, and use it as an excuse to share your own international experiences. As you know, international education in the U.S. is facing extreme challenges as a result of post-9/11 changes in immigration and State Department procedures. Already, enrollments in intensive English programs have dropped dramatically, and we are fearful that university enrollments will follow.

Visit the web site: [www.internationaleducationmatters.org](http://www.internationaleducationmatters.org) for information and data. I urge you all – U.S. citizens and international alumni – to seek out opportunities to speak to the importance of the free exchange of ideas. Each one of us can help keep the doors open.

**Roberta Christie**

## International Education Week *Celebrated in Tallahassee*



From l to r: Chancellor Debra Austin, Kyungran Roh, Jihong Lee, Jungshing Lee, Kathryn Riley, Li Feng, and Commissioner Jim Horne at City of Tallahassee reception.

Florida State University and the City of Tallahassee joined in celebrating International Education Week, November 17 – 21. The week, instituted by the U.S. Departments of State and Education, underscores the importance of international exchange and study in our educational, economic and social lives. In the words of Secretary of State Colin Powell, “... (I)nteracting with people of other countries promotes the free exchange of ideas, allows us to seek joint solutions to problems, and helps create lasting partnerships to meet our shared concerns.”

The celebration began with the 4th annual City of Tallahassee Reception for international students and their families from all three local institutions: Florida State, FAMU, and Tallahassee Community College. The reception, on November 18 at the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science, featured African drummers,

delicious food and information tables about city departments. Special guests this year were Florida’s Commissioner of Education Jim Horne and Debra Austin, Chancellor of the Florida University System. City Commissioner Andrew Gillum presented Commissioner Horne with a framed City Commission proclamation in support of International Week in Tallahassee. The annual event is coordinated through the City Office of Economic Development headed by Mr. George Suhr.

Exchange Scholars were honored at a gathering on November 21 in the President’s Skybox, University Center. Dr. Kirby Kemper, physics professor and Vice President for Research, and Dr. Jose Blanco, professor in Textiles and Merchandising in the College of Human Sciences, were featured speakers. Currently, Florida State hosts approximately 230 exchange visitors from approximately 30 countries. These visitors play vital roles in the teaching and research mission of the university.

# Meet Ruth Ann Nast

## NAFSA Region VII Volunteer of the Year



From l to r: Frank and Sara Ann Kocher (Ruth Ann's mentors), Ruth Ann Nast, Mafe Brooks, IC Program Coordinator and NAFSA Region VII COMSEC Rep., and Dr. David Austell, NAFSA Region VII Chair 2003.

"The award shows the admiration that so many of us in the international education community have for the way in which Mrs. Nast has promoted international education exchange and imparted her wealth of knowledge with so many of our students, scholars and other foreign visitors."

— Ms. Mihaela Metianu, former J-1 advisor at the FSU International Center, currently Assistant Director at Florida International University in Miami



**K**ind, dedicated, compassionate, energetic. These words describe Ruth Ann Nast, a loyal friend of the International Center. On November 10, we celebrated with her as she received the Community Volunteer Award at the NAFSA: Association of International Educators regional conference in Tampa, Florida. This annual award is given to an outstanding community volunteer who has served international students, scholars, and their families and provided leadership in community organizations.

Ruth Ann's contributions to Florida State's international community began soon after her 1974 arrival in Tallahassee with husband Don, chair and professor of finance. Highlights of her service are as follows:

- **Charter member of the International Women's Group:** For many years, Ruth Ann has helped plan IWG activities for spouses of international students and scholars, such as tours to local museums and parks, potlucks to celebrate U.S. holidays, discussions and presentations about cultural adjustment, health and safety.
- **English as a Second Language teacher:** Ruth Ann has taught English and U.S. citizenship classes at her church as well as facilitating conversation groups at the International Center.
- **Co-creator of Bridging Cultures: Serving International Students at FSU,** a cultural

Dr. Lydia Zablotska (l) with Ruth Ann at Lydia's graduation ceremony at Columbia University.

sensitivity training class offered through FSU Department of Human Resources.

- **Tallahassee Friend:** Ruth Ann has opened her home and heart to students through the International Friends Program.

It was through the International Friends Program that in 1995 Ruth Ann met Ukrainian student Lydia Zablotska, a medical doctor who was seeking a master's in Public Administration to further prepare herself for her career in public health administration. Lydia describes her friendship with Ruth Ann this way: "I not only made a great friend but also a mentor and advisor. Without her kindness and support, it would have been very difficult for me to adjust to the new life and rigors of the academic program. I feel very privileged to know her and count her as my friend. One of the greatest gifts that Ruth Ann gave me was the understanding of the life and values of Americans."

Even after Lydia graduated from FSU, the friendship remains close and constant through emails, telephone calls, and visits. Last June, Lydia invited her "Tallahassee Mom" to join her Ukrainian mother to celebrate Lydia's graduation from Columbia University with a doctorate in epidemiology.

In these and countless other ways, Ruth Ann has made international students, scholars and their families feel welcome in Tallahassee and tirelessly supported our work at the International Center. Please join us in thanking Ruth Ann for showing us that one person can indeed, make a difference in strengthening relations and deepening understanding among nations.



# Alumni Update Form

Alumni – Please send us your updated information.  
Fax: 850-644-9951 or mail to 107 S. Wildwood Dr., Tallahassee,  
FL 32306-4240 or email to [intctr@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:intctr@admin.fsu.edu)

Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle (Maiden)

Degree(s) Earned at FSU/Year \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street # City State/Zip Country

Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Work

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Business Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Spouse & Children \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Check us out on the internet at  
[www.internationalcenter.fsu.edu](http://www.internationalcenter.fsu.edu)

## Alumni Outreach & Development Update

**Benefit:** The IC Community Board had a great success in their first fund and friend-raising venture. On September 3, the board hosted a benefit night at the Tallahassee Little Theater. The \$20 ticket entitled our supporters to see the dress rehearsal of the delightful English farce, *Noises Off*, along with delicious food (donated by some of Tallahassee best and most generous restaurants), and a Silent Auction offering irresistible treasures. The result: a pleasant evening for almost 300 people and a \$4,000 gain for the International Center. Part of the money will be used to replenish the IC emergency loan fund and the rest to support programming and development efforts.

**Promoting Volunteer Service:** Erika Watters, a new member of the

board representing the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of North Florida and grant writer by training, is lending her talents to our cause. She and IC program coordinator Mafé Brooks are preparing a grant proposal to fund an effort to encourage international students to work with U.S. peers in community service projects.

**Annual Fund Solicitation:** Shawn Mallet, an FSU alumnus from St. Lucia who is now assistant director of the FSU Foundation's annual fund, transferred his enthusiasm for the

International Center to his staff of telephone bank callers. During a 3-week telephone campaign in September, approximately 35 of our friends and alumni pledged \$3,800 to support intercultural programming efforts.

These efforts represent small but significant steps in our long-range goal of setting up scholarships and assistantships for international students and increasing international programming. We invite you all to be a part of that effort.

**Special recognition to our first major donor, Mike Illers of Commodore Travel (1834 Hermitage Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL) who in 1998 pledged \$10,000 to the IC Development Fund. The IC will receive quarterly contributions through 2006. Thank you, Mike and the Commodore staff, for supporting international students and their families here in Tallahassee.**





FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**International Center**

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**Country:** Thailand

**Degree/Program:** Ph.D., International/Intercultural Development Education, specializing in Program Evaluation

**Years at FSU:** July 1997-December 2002

**Current position:** Computer Educator  
Bureau of Information and Communication  
Technology Office of Permanent Secretary,  
Thailand Royal Ministry of Education

**Alumni  
Profile**  
**Dr. Rangsun “Nu”  
Wiboonuppatum**

**Job description:** To promote and integrate e-learning in the Thai public school classrooms and to design national educational policies affecting information and communication technology. To serve as liaison between the Royal Ministry of Education and Oracle, Intel and other private technology companies to integrate technology into classrooms.

Dr. Wiboonuppatum coordinates activities with 47 schools to launch Intel Teach To the Future, a worldwide effort to help both experienced and pre-service teachers learn to use technology to enhance student learning. He also works with 100 schools using educational websites for children ages 7 - 14, provided through Oracle's Think.com program, a global, hosted web application designed to help schools meet their technology needs.

Dr. Wiboonuppatum's work also extends to the university and international level. He collaborates with 5 Thai universities in their supervision of 12 schools' efforts to integrate ICT into learning and curriculum, and frequently represents the Ministry of Education in international conferences, most recently a UNESCO conference in Japan.

Contact: [rangsun@emisc.moe.go.th](mailto:rangsun@emisc.moe.go.th)

