It is springtime at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The campus is beautiful with the blossoming of flowers and flowering trees. As I write this, the end of the semester is only a couple of weeks away. Students are busily finishing class projects and preparing for finals.

The Chinese Association and Japanese Association held their wonderful cultural festivals earlier this semester, and of course, the largest such event in this region, the Scott D. Morris International Food and Cultural Festival, was the magnificent culmination of the festival season.

We are already looking forward with great anticipation to the Fall 2017 semester, as it will be the first time UNK hosts an international alumni reunion! The UNK community is anxious to meet for the first time, or reconnect with international alumni representing several decades and all corners of the earth.

Our international recruitment specialists and I have had busy semesters as we continue to establish new contacts and relationships in Asia, Latin America, Europe and the Middle East. In the pages that follow, you will be able to read more about this, as well as a recent trip Assistant Director of International Partnerships and Study Abroad, Ann Marie Park, and Assistant Professor of Modern Language, Michelle Warren, took to visit Study Abroad destinations in Spain and Italy.

Speaking of Spain and Italy, I am pleased to report that our first group of students to participate in a semester abroad at Centro Universitario Villanueva, Madrid, are having an extraordinary experience in Spain’s vibrant capital city, and we are looking forward to welcoming the group of 28 Masters’ students from Libera Universita de Lingue e Comunicazione, Milan, who will spend two weeks at UNK in June.

I recently made a whirlwind trip to Brazil, where I was involved in 25 different meetings with existing or new partners and government officials during my twelve days there. The goal of those meetings was to recruit a variety of students; degree-seeking undergraduates, English Language learners, and short-term exchange students, as well as to establish new institutional partnerships. The success of this trip would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of UNK alumnus Paulo Jordão Fortes, who currently serves as the President of the Partners of the Americas program, and Professor Rômulo de Sousa, former President of Partners of the Americas.
**International Alumni Homecoming Reunion**

Planning is underway for the inaugural University of Nebraska at Kearney international alumni reunion, September 14-16, 2017. The reunion, being held in conjunction with UNK Homecoming festivities, will allow UNK international alumni from across the years and miles to reconnect and share memories from their college years.

All international UNK alumni, including short-term exchange/visiting and ELI, are invited to return to UNK for the reunion.

While the agenda is still being finalized, below is a general idea of what we have planned:

- **Thursday, September 14**—informal evening gathering
- **Friday, September 15**—campus activities such as tours, visiting classes and professors, meeting current international students, and a meal early Friday evening
- **Saturday, September 16**—represent your country along with our current international students in the Homecoming Parade, tailgate, football game, and an evening banquet.

As plans are confirmed, information will be available on the UNK International Alumni Facebook page and UNK International website. Make your plans now to attend! Please go to [http://www.unk.edu/international/international-alumni/index.php](http://www.unk.edu/international/international-alumni/index.php) to register for the reunion.

Refer any questions you may have to payneb@unk.edu. We look forward to welcoming you back to your second home in September!

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**Falconer to Present at 69th Annual NAFSA Conference**

Tracy Falconer, Assistant Director of International Student Services, Admissions and Immigration, has been selected to make a presentation at the 69th Annual NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors) conference taking place in Los Angeles in May.

Falconer learned of the opportunity through an email from NAFSA Region II requesting presenters who could speak on preparing students for academic success.

She developed the presentation, entitled *International Student Academic Integration Issues at Small, Medium, and Large Institutions*, along with colleagues from Arizona State University and the University of Colorado Boulder and Colorado Springs.

Falconer presented at the NAFSA Region II conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico in October of 2016. The presentation was selected as a Region II highlight and was therefore nominated to be included at the NAFSA annual conference.

Falconer has been instrumental in developing programming for new international students designed to help them acclimate and acculturate more quickly, and gain an understanding about American campus life and academic expectations. The ultimate goal is retention.

Initiatives include a new student orientation that includes academic readiness presentations, a peer-mentor program including academic success strategies, and focused advising for all international undergraduate students that encompasses both academic and cultural acclimation.

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**The Best Moment I Have Ever Had**

I am always so happy to share my greatest memories of UNK with many people here in Japan. My UNK life is still the best moment I have ever had. I am so thankful that I could have such a great time, and I am also blessed by every person I met in Kearney. Words cannot express how happy I was to be there. All students who are there can succeed in anything, because they are Difference Makers!

Yuki Hattori
Japan

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**Global Lopers (peer mentor program) students ice-skating at the Viaero Event Center**
UNK Establishes Chilean Partnerships

UNK International representative Kurt Stoppkotte recently travelled to Chile to meet with university officials, students, and government representatives, to further expand UNK’s internationalization efforts to support student mobility and academic cooperation. Stoppkotte built upon his prior experience and contacts with the U.S. Department of State, where he worked as a diplomat at the U.S. Embassy in Santiago for two years. According to Stoppkotte, “Chile is a wonderful destination for UNK students looking for an exchange opportunity in South America, as it is a very safe and stable country that values education. That same commitment to higher education means that there are also many Chilean students looking for opportunities to study overseas and UNK has the capacity to be an incredible host institution for those students.”

In fact, UNK has already hosted the first Chilean student from one of our recently-formed partner universities. Marcos Garcia, an English Education major from the Universidad Catolica Silva Henriquez (UCHS), received the Chilean Ministry of Education’s prestigious English Opens Doors scholarship which paid for all expenses associated with his semester-long experience at UNK.

According to Stoppkotte, “Marcos is an ideal ambassador not only for the Ministry of Education’s program, but for his entire country. He embodies the ideals we hope that international student mobility will support: intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and a desire to better understand foreign cultures and share one’s own culture with others.” Marcos will return to Chile in May, when he will finish his last semester of university and then will begin to teach English in a Chilean public school for two years, one of the requirements of his government scholarship.

UCHS Student and Academic Mobility Manager Paola Vega explained, “We are thrilled to be able to cooperate with UNK to promote international student mobility and hope that we will be able to not only send more students, but hopefully receive some from UNK.” Stoppkotte stated, “Today, more than ever, we need to promote academic and student exchanges so that we can foster an environment of better international awareness and understanding...and this is a great first step in the that direction.

“UNK now has agreements for cooperation with nearly a dozen Chilean universities. Any students, faculty members, or staff interested in research projects, educational programs, or exchange opportunities with these institutions should contact Kurt Stoppkotte (stoppkottekh@unk.edu) for further information.

International Students Participate in Student Research Day

Seven international students participated in the 19th annual University of Nebraska at Kearney Student Research Day, held April 11. Students who have conducted scholarly projects in collaboration with faculty mentors are eligible to make a presentation, either in the poster, oral, or performance format. Students who presented poster abstracts include:

- Elisabeth Treselius, Sweden (Political Science)
- Jianbai Xu, China (Mathematics)
- Maria Gutierrez, Colombia (Supply Chain Management)
- Sitong Liu, China (Biology)
- Chuanyao Zheng, China (Counseling/School Psychology)
- Olubusola Oladeji, Nigeria (Biology)

In addition to his poster abstract, Jianbai Xu made an oral presentation, Parity of Leaf Depths in Binary Trees.

So-Young Chun, South Korea (Music Theatre), performed Girl Crush. Realizing the roles of female characters in musicals are mostly limited to love, heartbreak and betrayal, she created this three-act performance that is a compilation of songs from musicals progressing through those roles to girls celebrating each others’ strengths.
Recruiting Korean Students

Every academic year, I travel to Korea during the fall and spring semesters to recruit degree-seeking, visiting, exchange, and short-term students. Because recruiting visiting and exchange students who only plan to be abroad for a semester or two takes less time and convincing than degree-seeking students who plan to dedicate a minimum of four years of education outside the home country, I build partnerships with universities for the former while seeking the latter through high schools, social media, and personal connections.

In approximately three weeks, I attempt to cover all of South Korea, visiting up to three institutions or families per day. I prioritize newly formed partnerships and institutions I have not yet visited to establish an in-person connection. Most recently, I worked in South Korea for three weeks starting in late February and covered most of the country, including Jeju Island separate from the mainland, visiting fourteen universities and one prospective family.

For the past year and a half at UNK, I have quickly discovered building genuine friendships with partner institutions or prospects to be far more efficient and effective than being overly formal, as many of these partners and families have shared with me they are sending UNK students due to our friendship and the trust it instilled.

Since my arrival at UNK in September of 2015, I have formed, renewed, and reinstated partnerships with nearly 40 Korean academic institutions, primarily universities, many of which consistently send UNK visiting and exchange students every semester. Beginning in the spring semester of 2016, UNK has received nearly 100 new Korean students, the majority for a semester or two, and I anticipate an additional 70 or so for fall 2017.

With the difficulties facing Korea’s economy, the number of Korean students interested in studying abroad has diminished rapidly over the past several years; a large percentage of those who still choose to study abroad select nearer countries in Asia, mainly China, for financial reasons. While numerous universities in the United States are currently coping with this struggle, the number of Korean students at UNK has been on a steady incline, which adds hope to the future of the internationalization of UNK.

Jake Kim, International Recruitment Specialist

Korean Association Honored as Organization of the Month

The Korean Student Association at Kearney (KSAK) was named the January Regional Organization of the Month by the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH). NRHH recognizes the Top 1% of leaders living in the residence halls, as well as students, staff, faculty, and student organizations for their outstanding efforts on campus.

Emily Hemmer, UNK student and NRHH member, submitted the nomination saying, “The remaining weeks of the semester are filled with studying, projects, and for some students, packing for the journey of thousands of miles home. Few activities can lure students out of their rooms during this time of year. On the Sunday before dead week, KSAK held their sixth annual Korean Festival.

More than a distraction from the stresses of finals, the Korean Festival allows the local community to learn about and celebrate Korean culture, as well as bring other international students together before many say their final goodbyes. Events like this festival and organizations like KSAK bring together community members from outside of the university, faculty, and students and provide a lively environment that focuses on education, celebration, and diversity.”
In February, Ann Marie Park, Assistant Director of International Partnerships and Study Abroad, and Michelle Warren, Assistant Professor of Modern Languages, visited the first cohort on UNK’s maiden voyage to Centro Universario Villanueva for a ninety-day intensive immersion stay in Madrid. They were greeted with wonderful weather and beautiful new friendships.

Their first afternoon, Park and Warren met Dr. Monika Meusmann and visited one of the apartments the school works with for housing. Currently, our students are placed in homes around Madrid, but apartments could be another alternative. That same evening, all of the international professors met them and the students at the Teatro Rialta on the Gran Vía to see a one-man musical show about a famous flamenco singer from the 1920s and 30s. Although our students had only been in Madrid two days at this point, it was evident that the professors had taken the time to get to know their names and personalities.

The following morning, Park and Warren met with Dr. Ana Cunquerella, the Director of International Education, to discuss programs of potential interest for student exchange. Some of the school’s strong programs include Psychology, Marketing, Graphic Design, and Fashion Design, among others.

Wednesday and Thursday, Warren observed all of our students’ courses. Of particular interest was “Get to Know Madrid” on Thursday afternoon, when Dr. Meusmann led the students on a tour of Madrid under Bourbon royalty. They walked from the Royal Palace to the oldest plaza in the city, stopping at the Mercado San Andrés for a taste of some paella. They then passed through the Plaza Mayor, and ended up at the Puerta del Sol, where “kilometro zero” marks the starting point for all routes around the country.

While Warren continued to learn about the program in Spain, Park visited IULM which is one of UNK’s newest partner institutions in Milan, Italy. During her visit she was impressed by the number of disciplines UNK has in common with IULM, by the modern IULM facilities, and English-speaking faculty members. In navigating around the area, she was able to take in the famous Duomo of Milan, and view great works of art and architecture, thinking, “It’s not often that one has the chance to see Leonardo da Vinci’s masterpiece The Last Supper while studying abroad!” After a short visit in Italy, she returned in time to join Warren for the flight back to Nebraska.

Warren continues to monitor UNK students in Spain through their weekly blogs which are written in Spanish - one criteria for earning UNK credit. She noted, “They have travelled from Seville to Barcelona and to Alicante. They continue to eat delicious Spanish cuisine, and make friends from Madrid. They recently each entered a short story writing contest. They appear to be having the time of their lives. ¡Viva España!”
Stopford Establishes Partnerships in Recent Brazil Visit

Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Affairs, Michael Stopford, spent twelve days in São Paulo and Teresina, Brazil, establishing partnerships with high schools and universities that will lead to the enrollment of Brazilian students in our English Language Institute, degree-seeking students, and possibilities for excellent study abroad destinations for UNK students.

Stopford’s first five days were spent in São Paulo. Most of the meetings that took place were with FAAP, an elite and prestigious private university that has high schools under its umbrella as well. He gave three lectures and presentations, one with undergraduate students and the others with high school students. The size of the audiences ranged from 80 to 280 interested and engaged students.

Stopford also met with the central administration of a large network of vocational colleges. UNK would be an excellent school for those students who have completed their programs of study and are wanting to obtain a bachelor’s degree, as we have many programs that would be of interest, such as Computer Science, Health Programs, and Supply Chain Management, for example.

Stopford’s final stop in São Paulo was at a second university, FEI, at which the initial focus was engineering, but has recently merged with another university, thus offering a more comprehensive university curriculum. It is highly regarded, especially in the more technical spheres.

During his six days in Piauí, Stopford met with several public and private universities, language schools, a private high school, and government agencies including the Governor of Piauí and the Mayor of the city of Teresina. All were quite productive and generated a great deal of interest in developing agreements that would benefit high school and university students interested in studying intensive English, or coursework in programs such as business, physical sciences, and computer science. Also of interest are short term programs for faculty that would include intensive English and lectures in their areas of teaching emphasis.

In a March 20 press release, Piauí Governor Wellington Dias said, “We are going to work on this cooperation involving Fapepi (Foundation for Support to Research of the State of Piauí), Uespi (State University) and Seduc (Secretary of State for Education).”

“There is a long relationship between Nebraska at Piauí, and we intend to re-establish that relationship, offering opportunities for both,” affirmed Stopford. Nebraska and Piauí consider themselves brother states and have maintained partnerships in education since 1972.

Devkota Named Kearney Noon Rotary Scholarship Recipient

UNK freshman, Prasanna Devkota, an Information Technology major from Nepal, has been named the recipient of the 2017-18 Kearney Noon Rotary International Scholarship.

International students pursuing an undergraduate degree are eligible to apply for the $1,500 award. Preference is given to students planning a career in humanitarian work. Thirteen UNK international students submitted applications.

Since childhood, technology and “gadgets” were always a fascination, but Devkota did not have access to current technology due to the economic conditions in Nepal. As he grew, he knew he wanted to pursue Information Technology and knew to get the best education, he would need to study in the U.S. In his search for universities, he discovered that Mahabir Pun, “one of the idols for Nepali students in the IT field,” is an alumnus of UNK and decided to follow in Pun’s footsteps by obtaining his degree at UNK.

It was volunteering after the devastating earthquake that sparked Devkota’s dream to provide future generations in Nepal with greater educational opportunities, as well as the technological means necessary for improved communication, transportation, and healthcare.
Scott D. Morris International Food and Cultural Festival

The annual Scott D. Morris International Food and Cultural Festival was held Sunday, March 5. Please enjoy the photos below, courtesy of the Office of University Communications and Marketing. To see the complete photo gallery, go to: http://unknews.unk.edu/2017/03/06/photo-gallery-international-food-festival-2/.

Samulnori, Korean percussion

Karate demonstration by Shota Suzuki, Japan

Traditional Mexican dance performed by Danza

Traditional Chinese Fan Dance

Children enjoying the activities at the cultural booths

Students from Oman and Nepal serving the foods they prepared