Welcome to the Fall 2015 edition of UNK Global News. Lots of exciting things are happening at UNK. In the last newsletter, I announced a new partnership with one of the best universities in Italy, IULM. Today you will be able to read about the launch of the Summer in Milan program in June of 2016 as a result of this partnership, and a new NU/UNK Scholarship program to support UNK students traveling abroad in the spring and summer of 2016. Other stories include Jerry Fox's well-deserved recognition for the global education achievements spanning his career at UNK, alumnus Deon Stewart representing UNK at the College Ready Bahamas Education Fair, international students competing in music and athletics, staff additions, and the Sister City trip to Dourados, Brazil.

Early this year, I learned of the large number of Omani students studying in the U.S., thanks to Omani Government Scholarships that fully fund four-year undergraduate degrees. While at the NAFSA Association for International Educators annual conference in May, I sought out the Head of the Omani Education and Culture Section of their Washington, DC Embassy and had the opportunity to meet with the staff member who oversees the program in Nebraska. They want to send more students to Nebraska, which they find uniquely welcoming, and expressed enthusiasm about UNK and the view that we could begin receiving their students in the near future. I am pleased to report the applications are coming in and our first group of Omani students will arrive in January, 1.5 decades after the last Omani students were enrolled here.

Speaking of NAFSA, its analysis of the 2014-15 academic year finds that the 974,926 international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities contributed $30.5 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 373,000 jobs. For Nebraska, this translates to a financial contribution of $143 million and support of 1,488 jobs, and even closer to home, a financial contribution of $12.5 million and support of 72 jobs to the Nebraska Third Congressional District. UNK’s international student impact was $9.9 million and 57 jobs.

As I write this, Professor Emeritus Vani Kotcherlakota and I are in India for the Indo-Global Education Summit 2015. We had contact with more than 500 prospective students the first morning and had to print 1,000 more brochures to finish out this event as well as visits to area high schools, universities, and Chambers of Commerce. I am extremely grateful to Professor Kotcherlakota for her assistance prior to and during this trip as well as arrangement of the whirlwind schedule of meetings in nearby towns over the next week. Her efforts were paramount to the success of this trip.

Again, enjoy this newsletter, and thank you for your contributions to the success of our international students and global initiatives.

Kotcherlakota (left) and Stopford (right) visiting with prospective students in Hyderabad, India
Study Abroad Launches New Destination and New Scholarship

Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, Charlie Bicak, recently announced the launch of a new three-week program, Summer in Milan, Italy, taking place during the month of June 2016. Four modules worth seven elective credit hours will be offered sequentially at IULM, Milan’s leading university for communications, creative design, and international relations. The modules include:

- Introduction to the Italian Language
- Milan Fashion and Design
- Cultural Economies and Creative Industries
- International Studies—Special Topics

This program will include a full introduction to the city of Milan—considered to be the powerhouse of the Italian economy as well as an international arts and cultural hub—with accompanied field trips to exhibition centers and museums and lodging within walking distance to campus.

Through the generous support of the University of Nebraska and Rotary International, the UNK Office of Study Abroad is able to offer substantial NU/UNK Study Abroad Scholarship awards, available to UNK students studying abroad during Spring or Summer 2016. The scholarship is intended to provide the opportunity for more students to study abroad during their undergraduate education and will be awarded at varying levels dependent upon the students’ need, GPA, and overall strength of their application.

More than sixteen countries were destinations for the 151 UNK students who participated in study abroad programs during the 2014-15 academic year. Countries receiving the largest number of UNK students for an entire semester were the Czech Republic, Ireland, and Peru.

A Salute to the Global Education Achievements of Professor Emeritus Jerald Fox

Retired Director of International Education and Professor Emeritus, Jerald Fox, was honored for his global education achievements by Dr. Natalie Hahn and the Malaika Foundation at a September 28, 2015 luncheon, hosted by Chancellor Doug Kristensen.

Fox began his career at UNK (Kearney State College) in 1975 as Assistant Professor of Modern Languages. In the 1980s, President William Nester requested that Fox accept an assignment as Foreign Student Advisor—an assignment that proved life-changing for the University and for Fox. That assignment grew into a half-time post as Director of International Education, which then expanded to full-time when Kearney State College joined the University of Nebraska system.

Professor Fox’s accomplishments are extensive and include initiatives critically important to UNK’s international outreach mission. He was responsible for the development of UNK’s English Language Institute, the intensive English program that prepares international students for undergraduate studies at UNK. He also developed the collaboration with the National Collegiate Network in Japan; collaboration with Mid-American Universities International, a consortium that encompassed 44 universities in the U.S. and Europe; collaborative work that led to the establishment of a study site at the Roosevelt Institute in Holland; UNK’s construction technology program with Rostock University in Germany, an internship program between Germany and Kearney; a program of study in the Czech Republic that continues to be greatly successful today, among other things.

Dr. Hahn founded the Malaika Foundation to enhance global education in Nebraska schools and provide resources and global fellowships (www.malaikafoundation.org). Malaika means “my angel” in Swahili. To honor Fox’s global education achievements and partnership with the Malaika Foundation, Dr. Hahn donated an oil painting by Nigerian artist Kunle Adegborioye to the University of Nebraska at Kearney. This painting is on display in the lobby of the Ockinga Seminar Center.
University of Nebraska at Kearney alumnus Deon Stewart represented his alma mater at a recent “College Ready Bahamas” education fair in Nassau. Stewart earned a B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 1996. He has lived in Nassau for more than fifteen years and works for the U.N. Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme Bahamas.

College Ready Bahamas took place at the Breezes Resort in Nassau and included visits to area high schools. Hundreds of prospective students and their parents attended the event.

According to the UNK Factbook, The Bahamas was the largest international group represented on the UNK campus in the mid-1990s with 59 students enrolled in UNK at that time. The population has since decreased. Stewart reached out to UNK two years ago, expressing a desire to make UNK known to high quality Bahamian students and revitalize the Bahamian population here.

Stewart reports there was a great deal of interest in UNK by the students and their parents. He received lots of positive feedback from the persons who visited with him during the event. One prospective student wrote, “UNK was the most interesting university to come to the fair.”

International Alumni, we have web pages for you: unk.edu/international

- Update your contact information with us and tell us what has been going on in your life
- Read about other UNK international alums
- Catch up on news and happenings by reading the Global Newsletters
- See the campus activity calendar or access the UNK Alumni Association website

If you are interested in being a person prospective students could email about life at UNK, contact Bonnie Payne at payneb@unk.edu.
Five International Students Advance to Regional Singing Competition

On Friday, October 2, ten UNK music students participated in the 2015 National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Student Auditions: Nebraska Chapter, held at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Five of those students (four singers: So-Young Chun, Hajeong Lee, Akira Watanabe, and Minori Yamauchi and one pianist: Ayane Nakajima) are current UNK international students. Participating in these auditions allows students to receive feedback from vocal music instructors who teach throughout the state of Nebraska. The state auditions consist of a preliminary round from which students receive the written comments of three judges, followed by a finals round in which students who receive high scores in the preliminary round perform before three different judges. All four of the international students advanced from the preliminary round to the finals round of competition. Ms. Chun, Ms. Watanabe, and Ms. Yamauchi are Musical Theatre majors at UNK and competed in the "Upper College Music Theater Women" Division; Ms. Nakajima accompanied Ms. Chun and Ms. Yamauchi on the piano. Ms. Lee, a Vocal Performance major, competed in the "Advanced College/Independent Studio Women" category and won first place.

International Education Staffing Changes

The Office of International Education is pleased to announce the filling of vacant positions and other staffing changes.

Traci Gunderson, who served as interim coordinator for the English Language Institute (ELI), has been named the full-time coordinator of the program. Gunderson holds a B.A. in International Studies from UNO and a M.S. in Global and International Education from Drexel University. Prior to being named the ELI Coordinator, Traci was the Assistant Director of UNK Academic and Career Services. Traci began her career at UNK in 2007 as an ELI instructor. In her short time as coordinator, she has accomplished the goal of doubling the number of full-time ELI instructors.

Jake Kim, a 2014 graduate of Emory University and grandson of former president of South Korea and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Kim Dae-jung, was hired to fill the position of Korean-Asian Recruitment and Support Specialist. He has hit the ground running since his September arrival on the UNK campus. Kim is dialoguing with universities, high schools, agencies, language institutes, and prospects in Asia and the U.S. about the endless possibilities for students at UNK.

Yasuyo Ikeda is the new NCN Student Advisor, replacing Val Hadley who resigned to pursue a new career opportunity. She holds a B.A. degree from Northwestern College in Iowa and has twelve years of professional experience in sales and corporate recruitment both in Japan and the United States.

Younian (Tinker) Yan, a UNK junior Multimedia major from Shenyang, China, has been hired part time to assist with social media marketing. Yan, an outstanding photographer/videographer, is researching new media worldwide and is in the process of developing a UNK presence on a variety of platforms.
Loper Tennis Players Come from Around the World

By Andrew Hanson

KEARNEY – One look through the hometown listings on Jake Saulsbury’s tennis roster sheet, and it’s clear the University of Nebraska at Kearney head men’s and women’s tennis coach has a unique roster. With as many players from other countries as the United States on the women’s squad and three players from Spain and two from Egypt on the men’s team, Saulsbury’s tennis rosters have a heavy emphasis placed on international student-athletes.

“First and foremost, our recruiting model is always based on trying to find the best players possible that fit in at the University of Nebraska at Kearney,” Saulsbury said. “We do look at local kids. We look at in-state Nebraska kids first and then start branching out of state to international. We just try and build our lineup as strong as we can. We like diversity on our team.”

The tendency of recruiting international tennis players is not something new for Saulsbury or Division II tennis. At last year’s NCAA Sweet 16, only 20 of the 256 student-athletes participating were from the United States. “It’s not that American tennis can’t match that level, it’s just there’s only so many players that can go around,” Saulsbury explained. “The top American players that would usually play in the top-three of our lineup are usually looking at Division I.”

Saulsbury, who is now entering his seventh year at UNK, has been following this recruiting model since his arrival in 2009. He had four international student-athletes his first year with one from Australia and Mexico and two from Indonesia “A player from India came in the next year, and it has just grown since then,” Saulsbury said.

This year, Saulsbury’s got eight international players on his roster with Spain, Egypt, China and Venezuela all being represented. “I don’t necessarily recruit from the same country all the time,” he said. “I like diversity on our team and getting as many countries represented as possible.”

While Saulsbury recruits globally, he often dips into the tennis hotbed in Europe. “We have a lot of players from Spain currently on our roster right now,” Saulsbury added. “European tennis is always strong. Typically in Europe, you’re going to find a lot of players that are at least a certain level that can play in your lineup.”

Saulsbury took a recruiting trip to Europe a few years ago to cultivate relationships with the coaches over there. “The trip was more to build my contacts with the coaches and different recruiting agencies or academies,” said Saulsbury. “It’s through those coaches and recruiting services that Saulsbury finds most of his players. “We have those contacts year-in and year-out. We’ll meet with them over Skype and through phone calls and emails. Then, we kind of compile a list of players from them as well as what comes into us, “Saulsbury said on the process of finding players.

“There’s a couple recruiting services that we use on a regular basis. That’s usually the starting point.” Saulsbury also uses the International Tennis Federation’s player database where he finds players in the junior rankings.

Recruiting services and databases aren’t the only place Saulsbury has found players, though. “We’ve found players on Instagram actually before,” he said. “We’ve found players on YouTube through a recruiting video there. We’re looking everywhere we possibly can.”

Saulsbury tries to prepare the student-athletes before they come to Kearney, too. “You’ve got to know yourself pretty well and just be open to change because a lot of the time they’re coming into a completely different environment,” Saulsbury said. “But at the same time, these kids that come in get pretty well connected with their teammates and it becomes a family-type environment that we try and promote. “Then outside of that, we encourage them to have a good strong foundation of friendships formed and getting involved in other things that aren’t just athletics.”

Senior Paula Jimenez and Junior Sthefani Rodriguez, who are both Division I transfers, have found UNK to be the perfect home. A native of Barcelona, Spain, Jimenez was hesitant about coming to a town as small as Kearney. “I am a city girl, and I am used to doing the things that a city girl usually does,” Jimenez explained. “At first, I wasn’t sure what I was putting myself into. I didn’t know if coming to such a small town was going to be the right fit for me. But I wouldn’t change this experience for anything.”

Rodriguez, who is from Maracay, Venezuela, has found UNK to be the perfect fit as well. “I wanted to be able to have the time to study and have a normal life, but also to have the time to be an athlete and travel everywhere,” Rodriguez said. “This school has it. I have the time to enjoy both of those things. I’m so happy I chose this school.”

Jimenez feels the same way about her choice to transfer. “My experience here at UNK as an international student-athlete has been amazing,” she said. “The tennis team is my family. I have the best coaches I could ask for and at the same time, teammates that are like my brothers and sisters.”
By HEATHER RIGGLEMAN Hub Staff Writer

KEARNEY—Floating down a winding river is a pastime in Kearney’s sister city, Dourados, Brazil. Kearney High School teachers Scott Steinbrook and Amber Lewis found themselves at home there. “Ironically, Amber and I are a part of the Kearney Whitewater Association, and we were surprised how similar a large Brazilian city is to Kearney,” Steinbrook said.

Steinbrook, Lewis, and Michael Stopford, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for International Affairs at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, returned Aug. 5 from a weeklong trip to Dourados with ideas and plans to bring their experiences as well as new connections into their classrooms.

Lewis has been teaching social studies, history and women’s studies for eight years. “Dourados is only an hour behind us so it will be easy to bring the culture of the city into the classroom through social media and Skype,” she said.

Steinbrook teaches business and technology. “Traveling outside the country is life-changing, and it’s something I want to encourage students to do. It brings about a different global perspective,” he said. Steinbrook said he and Lewis fit the profile to help build relationships with Dourados. “First and foremost we are educators, which aids in finding common ground in developing a relationship with a city in another country.”

Stopford said organizations such as Sister Cities create interconnections. “Sister Cities is an international global platform partnering of cities who feel they have something in common and want to further economic, social, cultural and educational ties,” he said. The program’s goal is to develop a strong international relationship between cities such as Kearney and Dourados worldwide in education, youth exchange, cultural exchange, leadership, business and trade, and community development. More than 500 U.S. communities have sister cities through the Sister Cities International program, which was established by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1956.

The trio of travelers found the outside areas of the city to be strikingly similar to the Kearney area. “As we were traveling into the city, it reminded me of Highway 30. On one side was crops of corn or soy, and on the other were fields of cows,” Steinbrook said.

The Kearney travelers were most surprised by the Brazilians’ friendliness and their love for barbecues. “We’ve all seen the sign about visiting Nebraska means you’re visiting, nice, and it could have been their slogan. The people were just like Kearney people, very friendly. Their family values were the same as ours. They ate dinner together, love barbecues, and their love for soccer is just as passionate as the Huskers, if not more,” he said.

What surprised Steinbrook the most was an agricultural expo in the city while he was there. “The map looked just like the layout of our fairgrounds. It felt like we were in Nebraska,” he said. Other similarities, according to Stopford, is that both cities are growing in prosperity and attracting diverse businesses.

“For Kearney, a link with a growing agribusiness community in one of the most prosperous agricultural communities of Brazil should open some interesting opportunities for our community, whether it’s business, social, educational, cultural. For UNK, the partnership with the Federal University of Grande Dourados — a thriving and growing public university with expertise in agribusiness, technology and other areas of shared interest — should open new avenues for students and faculty alike. And we are connecting with the state university as well,” Stopford said.

“We’re all committed to improving the global aspect of our community,” Lewis said.