Letter from the Director

The Reves Center's mission is to support and promote the internationalization of learning, teaching, research, and community involvement at the College of William & Mary. One of the ways we do this is through our efforts to integrate international students, foreign scholars, members of heritage communities here in the Williamsburg region, and U.S. citizens interested in global affairs into a broader intellectual community.

This work touches every part of the College. The globalization of research and teaching in the 21st century spawned by recent geopolitical, economic, and technological revolutions has by now made every field of intellectual inquiry an international one. The number of international students at W&M continues to rise, with 6 percent of this year’s freshman class coming from countries outside the United States, and the number of international applicants for the Class of 2016 at an all-time high. As is the case at other American research universities, too, much of William & Mary’s cutting-edge research depends on the manifold contributions of our international students and scholars. International students and scholars are thus crucial contributors to our world-class academic excellence.

The international members of the College community contribute in more subtle ways as well. Although William & Mary now leads the nation among universities of its type in the rate of undergraduate participation in study abroad, not every W&M student can manage to work a foreign educational trip into his or her curriculum before graduation. For them, the presence on campus of so many brilliant people from countries around the world creates a crucial opportunity for global learning and cultural understanding—even if this interaction takes place in classrooms, laboratories, clubs, and social events here in Williamsburg, rather than in distant lands. And after our international students and scholars return to their home countries, the deep connections forged at William & Mary generate a truly global alumni network, which can work in unexpected ways to foster the education and spirit of collaboration that is at the heart of our unique liberal arts university. Beyond this, the families, friends, and community supporters of the Reves Center also generously donate their time and resources to help us create a truly welcoming environment for scholars, students, and staff members from countries around the world.

In this issue of World Minded, we present multiple perspectives from this broader international community at William & Mary. We look forward to hearing from our readers in the months and years ahead so that we can learn about your stories as well!

Steve Hanson
Director of the Reves Center
Vice President for International Affairs
Hee Kyung Baek was born and raised in South Korea and came to the United States for education at age 15. She is currently a sophomore neuroscience major at William & Mary, and has been actively involved in civic and community engagements with a strong wish to spread her belief in the power of students to affect change through service. Hee served as the Program Coordinator of Reves Hall, the College’s international living-learning community, in Fall 2011.

A devotion to service has been a primary focus for me since I first set foot on the William & Mary campus. In my search for a specific opportunity, I was lucky enough to see a single flyer that stood out from the rest in the messiness of the boards in the Sadler Center. The post with “The Global Village” in bold font somehow caught my attention. The next thing I knew I was writing on my strong intention to dwell in the small, isolated brick building on the outskirts of campus: Reves Hall.

With a deceptively uninteresting appearance, Reves Hall is actually a highly motivating, interactive, and educational community. The residents are strongly encouraged to explore and understand the values of different cultures and to learn the importance of developing a global perspective. As the Reves Hall Program Coordinator in the Fall of 2011, I had the honor of serving Reves Hall residents and helping them develop knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity to other cultures and languages by coordinating diverse activities.

From potluck dinner parties to a monthly, campus-wide, internationally themed lecture series, the Reves Hall Coffee Hour, Reves Hall hosts activities that are designed to raise global awareness. My job was to make sure that such an environment nurtured the community, their, and my, experience.

Living in Reves Hall and serving its community wasn’t just about exposure to and learning from the student body with its great assortment of differing backgrounds. Nor was it merely about exchanging cultural ideas. Rather, it served as a guide that helped us learn from the similarities among us, including the shared responsibility for our global generation. It opened up the gate to a road of discovery, and acceptance, of being a so-called ‘active’ global citizen. In either a conscious or unconscious manner, 28 of us have strived to not only bring concepts and ideas from classrooms to the community, but also to adopt the favorable skills necessary to survive in our internationalized society.

From my experience of living in the Global Village has truly made me appreciate every conversation, fresh perspective, and shared value of my fellow “global-mates.” I will cherish them in my heart always.

Frederick Corney is the James Pinckney Harrison Associate Professor of History at the College of William & Mary. He took his Ph.D. at Columbia University, and teaches Russian and Soviet history at the College. His research interests are in early Soviet revolutionary culture. He has directed or taught in ten study abroad programs.

I still remember my college year abroad very well. As part of my degree in Modern Languages at the University of Bradford in England, I spent six months in France studying Russian, and six months in Germany as a trainee translator. I then went to Southern Russia for six weeks the following summer. In Paris, I remember french fry machines on the street, eating impromptu student meals of cheese and baguette, and visiting museums whenever entrance was free. In Munich, I remember being tongue-tied in German on my arrival, early-morning tram rides to work, and a visit to the Dachau concentration camp. These are just random moments from the rich experience of that year abroad, an experience that was more than the sum of its parts. My active foreign language skills certainly improved, but that was only part of it. I no longer looked at the world solely from the viewpoint of England. I was now able to look at England from the outside. More importantly, I no longer looked at people solely from an English viewpoint.

As a program director in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Cambridge and Prague, and as a visiting professor at Leiden, I have had the pleasure of seeing students collecting their own moments abroad, and viewing the world differently on their return. Pedagogically, in-country instruction obviously offers unique opportunities to enhance foreign language skills and a broader cultural awareness. The St. Petersburg program is as close to an immersion program as can be offered in a period of six weeks. Homestays with Russian families and instruction by local Russian teachers allow the students no time to ‘hide’ from Russian. The cultural intimacy of this experience is quite simply irreplaceable. The Prague program too, while it is not intended primarily for Czech language instruction, offers Prague as a living laboratory for the exploration of, for example, the ways in which Czech culture addresses its extended periods of occupation first by the Nazis and then by the Soviets. The range of possibilities for instruction expand enormously in-country.

I find it especially reassuring that many of my students returned from their summer programs only to apply immediately for a semester of study in England and the Netherlands or for a year-long program of study in Russia and South Africa. This is clear evidence of their personal and intellectual transformation while abroad. They are now viewing America from the world, rather than the world from America.

We can certainly measure these experiences abroad in terms of improvement in language skills, of richer historical knowledge, and of enhanced cultural receptivity. So I salute those students who went to Auschwitz after a grueling all-night bus trip from Prague, and those students who came with me to a Lenin museum outside of St. Petersburg, even though I was unsure it still existed. But as I am sure these students would attest, abiding memories can come from unexpected sources. So I also salute the student in St. Petersburg who called me late one night convinced he had giardia; the student in Prague who missed the bus to Plzen and found his own way there; the student who was pickpocketed in Moscow and had settled the whole matter before I could get there. I even salute the student who checked out of our hotel in Moscow without his shoes. This is the small stuff, and in many ways the best stuff, that makes study abroad their, and my, experience.

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“...I have had the pleasure of seeing students collecting their own moments abroad, and viewing the world differently on their return.”
Lois Critchfield is a member of the Reves Center Advisory Council, and was a member of the Reves Steering Committee from 2005-2009. She retired from the Central Intelligence Agency in 1982 after 28 years’ service. In 2005, she was the recipient of the W&M Lord Botetourt Award and in 2006 became a William & Mary Honorary Alumna. She also serves on the Board of Governors of the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C.

I have had a close connection to the Reves Center since 2003 when I created the James H. Critchfield Memorial Endowment for Middle East Studies. Both my husband James and I had many years of government service in the Middle East. The Endowment is unusual in that it is made up of donations from more than 76 individual donors, including family, friends and corporations. Over the years, I have raised more than $700,000 and my goal is to see it reach $1 million. The Reves Center administers the endowment, which provides not only scholarships for study abroad in the Middle East but also supports a wide range of activities taking place on campus and in the greater Washington area. I work closely with the Middle East faculty on these programs and have been an active member of the Reves Advisory Council in its focus on internationalization.

2011 was the best year yet for the Critchfield Endowment. And none too soon, as the Arab Spring catapulted to center stage in the Middle East marking probably the most significant global event to take place since the fall of the Soviet Union. William & Mary students have become even more interested in the dynamics of change and the Critchfield Endowment provided many opportunities for them to engage. Since 2004, the Critchfield Endowment has provided scholarships for 48 students who studied in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman. I make it a point to get to know these students personally. They and faculty are frequent guests in my home in Governors Land.

W&M students, with support from the Endowment, also attended two important Washington conferences in October and November of 2011, those hosted by the National Council on US-Arab Relations and the Middle East Institute. These events give students valuable insights into the politics of the region as seen from Washington. They also have the opportunity to rub shoulders with ambassadors and Middle East experts.

The highlight of the year was when the Oman Minister of Higher Education and her delegation travelled from Oman to Williamsburg to sign an agreement establishing a Sultan Qaboos Professorship for Middle East Studies. I worked on this project for two plus years. This comes at a time when the Asian Middle East Studies (AMES) program is getting underway and the new position will undoubtedly become an anchor for AMES.

The College of William & Mary offers students the option of living in one of eight residence halls dedicated to the study of language and culture. Diego Diaz is a past Spanish House Tutor who has become the on-site program coordinator of W&M’s La Plata, Argentina semester abroad. This program is the only semester study abroad program for American university students in La Plata, and is structured entirely around the in-depth, interdisciplinary study of human rights.

My first time in Williamsburg was in August 2008 when I started work as the William & Mary Spanish House Tutor. I lived in the Spanish House for nine months with 24 students, and also taught a course in Hispanic Studies. It was a very interesting experience to have the time to make new friends, travel around a new country and discover new ways of understanding the culture, economy and policies of the United States.

I returned to Argentina in 2006, and from 2007 until today I have been the on-site coordinator for the William & Mary study abroad semester program in La Plata. It is an educational program that places particular attention on human rights due to its relationship with the Commission for Memory, an organization known around the world for its defense of human rights.

Every day in my work with William & Mary students I am reminded of the importance of education. Not just giving students the best education, but reminding them that the best education can be used to make them better people, and to contribute to building better communities. During their time in La Plata I watch the students change their ideas, projects, and perceptions. This is by far the most interesting way to understand what we do and why we are doing it.

My favorite part of working on the La Plata program is being able to show students my country and teach them more about it. Argentinian history has left us a legacy that today we are still debating, and I can see that being able to share this information with students, and exposing them to our rich history, as well as political and cultural identities, changes their mentalities and visions.

Studying abroad is a vital experience in the life of a student. Sometimes we believe our country is the world, but to travel, not as tourists but as part of an educational experience, brings with it the possibility of learning that there are other worlds as well. I believe that this is a key to bringing about change - when we understand there are differences in the world we know that we can also be different.

Or, at the very least, try to change.
We met and became best friends in Connecticut twenty years ago when our husbands worked for the same international bank in New York. A few years ago our families both retired to Williamsburg, and we started looking for a meaningful volunteer opportunity to do together at the College of William & Mary. In the fall of 2009 we found just what we were looking for through the International Spouse Network's Conversation Partners program at the Reves Center. We were attracted to the program because of the opportunity to get to know international families and to help them feel more at home in our community. While Carolyn lived in Singapore she was an English as a Second Language teacher and thought she could bring those skills to this program.

In the past three years we have enjoyed the pleasure of knowing two sets of Japanese conversation partners. Our first conversation partners were from Japan and had been at William & Mary for a year when the program was started. We met weekly for eight months with Reiko Kitagawa and Yoko Tajima, and Yoko’s young children Hinata and Sota, until their husbands graduated and they moved back to Japan. We still keep in touch via email and holiday cards.

Because we enjoyed our first experience with the program, and because we received so much more than we gave, we wanted to accept two more conversation partners. Our current conversation partners are also from Japan. They are Tomoko Nakada and Izumi Suzuki, as well as Izumi’s adorable 4-year-old daughter Kokoro. We have been meeting with them since September 2010. Tomoko’s husband Takao and Izumi’s husband Hiroyuki are studying for their MBAs at the College of William & Mary’s Mason School of Business.

Tomoko and Izumi have impressed us greatly with their willingness to practice speaking English, their interest in American culture, and their excitement in going on outings in the area. We try to take them to the museums, historic homes, and parks on the Peninsula. These outings give us an opportunity to explore our area together and to talk about what we are discovering in our historic community. We all learn something every time we are together! We also meet in our homes so that they can experience American homes and traditions. It has been a joy for us to see the progress that these women have made in their English while spending two years in the United States. It has been especially fun to see 4-year-old Kokoro flourish in our culture and become very comfortable speaking English.

Tomoko and Izumi sometimes prepare traditional Japanese food for us and enthusiastically teach us about their traditions, holidays and culture. They have shown us around the Asian food markets in Newport News, made lovely origami ornaments for us, taught us Japanese words and calligraphy, and shown us how to wear their yukatas. They have included us in international festivals and pumpkin carvings at the Reves Center, and a Japanese Culture Night (Matsuri) at the Mason School of Business. We have so much fun together!

We have gained so much from being a part of the International Spouse Network’s Conversation Partners program, and from the privilege of knowing these lovely women and learning about their country and culture. We talk about so many diverse subjects and share our cultures and traditions. We talk about their travels and adventures. We talk about our families, and what we have learned is that there are many more similarities than differences between us.

We will miss Tomoko, Izumi and Kokoro when they move back to Japan in the spring but it is nice to know that we have good friends to visit if we are ever lucky enough to travel to their beautiful country!
Tomoko Nakada was co-leader of William & Mary’s International Spouse Network (ISN) from 2011 – 2012. The International Spouse Network is a program organized by the Office of International Students, Scholars, and Programs that seeks to support the spouses and significant others who have accompanied their partners to William & Mary and Williamsburg. Tomoko’s husband, Takao Nakada, is an MBA student at the Mason School of Business. Before arriving in Williamsburg, Tomoko worked at a travel agency and enjoyed international travel.

In August 2010, I had the chance to come to Williamsburg with my husband because he wanted to study at the College of William & Mary. I had wanted to live in a foreign country for a long time, but after the dream came true I found myself nervous in my new life. I knew little about life in Williamsburg before I arrived and did not know much English. I also was not feeling confident about spending my time without a job and friends. However, as soon as I got in touch with the Reeves Center my worries disappeared. The Reeves Center provides support and offers programs to spouses who, like me, are from other countries.

One of the ways the Office of International Students, Scholars, and Programs (ISSP) supports W&M’s international community is the International Spouse Network (ISN). This group meets once a week and we can do anything we want. Last semester we had many classes, including a language exchange lesson, hula dancing, cooking, ornament-making, a pot luck party and so on. For me, ISN meetings are places not only to learn about cultural diversities, but also to share common worries and relax. The conversations I have with the other members always delight me, and I enjoy making new friends.

Another ISSP program that supports the international community is the Conversation Partners Program. The Reeves Center arranges the conversation partners. My Japanese friend, Izumi Suzuki, and I were paired with two local American women, Anita Lowe and Carolyn Lodzieski. The four of us meet once a week. When we first started meeting, it was very difficult for us to communicate in English, but Anita and Carolyn were very kind and tried to understand what Izumi and I wanted to say. Though the meetings were like English lessons at first, gradually they became more like cultural lessons about life in America. I am very lucky to have been matched with my conversation partners, because they are very concerned with whether my friend and I are comfortable living here and if we are having a good time. They have taken us to many interesting places like museums and parks in Williamsburg, Richmond, and Norfolk. They have been excellent teachers, both of the English language and teaching me more about volunteering and taking care of others.

Before I came here, I hadn’t thought very much about the expats who live in Japan. When I return to my home country I want to find out more about them and learn more about how I can help them. I must do something to return the kindness that others have shown me here in Williamsburg. This is my very fond wish.

The documentary filmmaking process requires a tremendous amount of patience, discipline, creativity, and flexibility. You need to deal with people, but know how to troubleshoot technology; you must be organized, but open to spontaneity; you should be prepared for everything, but comfortable working in the unknown. For the eight students who studied abroad in the summer of 2011 in St. Petersburg, Russia, they had the added challenge of doing it all in Russian.

Over the course of the past three years, professors Frederick Corney and Alexander Prokhorov made undergraduate research the central component of William & Mary’s St. Petersburg summer study abroad program. Each year, students work on research projects concerning places of memory and urban development in St. Petersburg. Specifically, students examine how these sites are remembered within a larger, public representation. Professor Prokhorov, the program’s director during the summer of 2011, wanted to include an element of video production into the projects and that’s how I became involved.

As the College’s environmental filmmaker-in-residence, I’ve sought to incorporate media production into current research and coursework across disciplines on campus. Professor Prokhorov saw the potential for collaboration, and with the support of a Reeves Center Faculty Fellows grant, students gained access to camcorders and microphones, learned field production skills, collaborated with St. Petersburg journalism students, and acquired international documentary production experience.

“Making a documentary is a lot of work, but it’s exhilarating after you interview someone,” says Sophie Kosar ’14, whose project focuses on the controversial construction of a new seaport and business district, the Marine Façade, on the western shores of the city. “You realize you had to forge this connection with your subject, you had to do this yourself.”

Will Lahue ’12, whose project explores how Russian Orthodox community and Gothic subculture define Smolensky Cemetery as a site of commemoration, realizes the benefits of working on his film. “I’ve gained a more rapid acclamation into Russian society. Just running around getting things done, meeting people, it’s been a challenge. I’ve needed to accomplish a lot in Russian and that’s been good for me.”

Introducing students to video production in study abroad programs forces them out of their comfort zone, stretches their limits, and pushes them to interact in ways they would not have otherwise. The project has the potential to serve as a model for other study abroad programs that want to challenge their participants to make connections, to pay attention, and to be creative.

“The biggest thing I’ve gained in this project is confidence in networking with people,” says Monika Bernotas ’12. “It’s amazing how many people have returned my emails to say they would be willing to help out.”

On November 29, 2011, these documentaries were screened to the larger William and Mary community. In March 2012, they were exhibited at the Slavic Forum at the University of Virginia.
The Foreign Lands Ambassador Group (FLAG), organized by the Office of International Students, Scholars, and Programs, gives international as well as returned study abroad students the opportunity to share their knowledge of other countries and cultures with local elementary school children. In doing so, the program promotes international education, nurtures multi-cultural understanding and friendship, and strengthens the connection between William & Mary students and the local community.

Owing to the dedication and support of Rawls Byrd Elementary’s Library Media Specialist Vaudene “Viky” Pedigo and ISSP staff, the program has blossomed into exchanges that allow W&M Foreign Lands Ambassadors to share folktales, pictures, songs, and other cultural interests with children in an open and friendly environment. Not only does the FLAG program support the Virginia Standard of Learning: Global Learning which strives to assist students in becoming informed global participants, but under Ms. Pedigo’s enthusiastic encouragement it also allows everyone involved to enjoy and understand more of each other’s cultures. In the words of one Rawls Byrd student, W&M Foreign Lands Ambassadors “are special gifts to our school!”

In fall 2011, Rawls Byrd Elementary hosted five FLAG ambassadors from China, Japan, Jordan, and the United Kingdom. Each of these W&M students shared an aspect of culture with Rawls Byrd students, including flags and symbols, history, clothing, art, folktales, sports, and cuisine.

Lana Hill, an exchange student from the United Kingdom, flashed landmarks of interest on the large screen, as well as famous personalities including the Royal Family and Harry Potter. She explained the flag of the United Kingdom – the Union Jack – and how it represents the countries of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales. Understanding the flag’s design, the students made copies for themselves.

Al-Sharif Musab Al-Barakait of Jordan shared a PowerPoint of his country highlighting the historic ruins of the fortress-like town of Petra, built of pink stone by the Nabatean people who came from the desert in the 6th Century BC. He pointed out the Dead Sea, whose shore is the lowest point on earth at 1,300 feet below sea level. He stressed the importance of education to Jordanians whose schools are in session year round with a month’s vacation two times a year. Musab also wrote his name in Arabic, and reminded the students that the numerals they write are Arabic. He brought several objects of interest, including his prayer rug and red and white keffiyeh, the traditional Arab headdress worn by men.

After Riho Terayama introduced her country, Japan, she discussed and demonstrated the ancient Japanese art of origami. The students were familiar with the story of Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, about a child with leukemia who hoped to fold one thousand cranes to make her wish of wellness come true. She passed away before she could finish, but her classmates completed the project to honor her memory. Today, brightly colored origami cranes have become a symbol of peace for people around the world. After the students successfully folded the crane, Riho shared instructions on folding origami frogs and boats.

Hao Shi from China amazed the students with his eye-hand coordination, fast reflexes, and hand control through the manipulations of chopsticks, nunchaku, and string. The students knew some chopstick lore, but were fascinated with new facts such as their being in use since the 3rd century and learning a magic trick of breaking a chopstick with a single sheet of paper. Hao’s dexterity with the nunchaku, known to us from martial arts films as nun-chucks, was amazing. His training has been noted to increase hand speed, correct posture, and improve reflexes and hand control. Freestyle displays in competition are common in China today.

Rong Wang from China served bubble tea or “pearl milk tea” which originated in tea shops in Taichung City, Taiwan during the 1980s. The tea contained small, chewy balls made of tapioca starch known as “pearls.” Turkish Delight, a favorite sweet from fairy tales, was served to accompany the tea. As the student savored their treats, Rong spoke with each student as she demonstrated the art of calligraphy in writing the student’s name and interpreting the characters’ qualities and personality characteristics, such as peaceful, successful, loyal, clever and adventurous.
Frank Shatz is an international affairs columnist for The Virginia Gazette. During the Second World War Shatz was forced into a Nazi slave labor camp. He escaped, and joined the anti-Nazi underground in Hungary. After the war he became a foreign correspondent based in Prague. A close friend of the late Emery Reeves, Shatz was instrumental in persuading Reves’ widow, Wendy, to endow the Center for International Studies at the College of William & Mary.

It may have been by coincidence, or maybe ordained by fate.

On the very same day the College of William & Mary announced its intention to establish a world-class center for international studies, I received a letter from Wendy Reves, the widow of the late Emery Reves, my friend and mentor, and the author of the seminal work, The Anatomy of Peace.

My relationship with Emery Reves began when I read his book in Czech translation. It became my bible. While escaping from Communist Czechoslovakia, with only the clothes on our back and one small piece of hand luggage, my wife, Jaroslava, without my knowledge, placed it among our belongings. The book is now part of the Special Collection at the Swem Library.

During our first return trip to Europe, I decided to pay respect to the man who had so profoundly influenced my outlook on world events. Reves agreed to see me for 30 minutes. The visit lasted three hours. Our meetings in the ensuing years became routine. He became my mentor and close friend. He was steady in his belief that world peace can be achieved only through universal law and if enough well-educated young people embrace this idea.

When I received Wendy’s letter so many years later, she asked for assistance. She was determined, she wrote, to create a memorial that would reflect Emery’s vision of world peace based on universal law. But she was at loss to find the right vehicle.

As a columnist for The Virginia Gazette, I was familiar with the accomplishments and the reputation of William & Mary. Thus my wife, Jaroslava, and I, recommended to Wendy to select the College as the recipient of her endowment.

I managed to persuade Wendy that a Center of International Studies at William & Mary, an institution of higher learning with a history of some 300 years, would be the perfect vehicle for disseminating Emery’s concept of achieving world peace. Wendy’s endowment at that time was the largest single donation in William & Mary’s long history. But it paid off. During the Reves Center’s 20 year of existence it has established a sterling reputation in many areas.

The W&M Model United Nations team has taken first prize, repeatedly, competing against students from the most prestigious universities of the world. The work of many students is showcased in the Monitor, a student-run undergraduate journal that publishes the best undergraduate student research on a wide range of international subjects. And the Reves Center is now poised to play a vital role in internationally focused and interdisciplinary academic programs.

It was with immense satisfaction that I was able to convey to Wendy, not long before her death, that former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright proclaimed the international studies curriculum at William & Mary “perhaps the finest undergraduate international relations program in the country.”

Chitralekha Zutshi is associate professor of history and director of South Asian Studies at the College of William & Mary. She was born and raised in India, educated in India, Europe, and the United States, and is author of Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir. She is currently coordinator of the Reves Center sponsored India Initiative Project.

A mere two weeks after I joined William & Mary in August 2001 as its first historian of South Asia, America was forced to reevaluate its ideological and political position in global affairs. In some ways, the events of September 11, 2001 compelled us all—academics, policy makers, and lay people, both within and outside America—to confront the awful power of the forces of globalization, from which, it was clear, America could no longer consider itself immune. Once the trauma of the events had subsided, it became increasingly apparent that institutions of higher learning had a key role to play in educating the next generation of Americans to become global citizens by engaging at multiple levels with the world.

South Asia has become exceedingly salient in global affairs in the aftermath of 2001. This is in part because of the war in Afghanistan, which has drawn Pakistan, and to a lesser extent, India, into its ambit, and in part because India has emerged as a powerful global economic player in this period. This has greatly influenced my teaching and research on South Asia at William & Mary in the past decade. As a teacher, I strive to place America’s involvement in the region and South Asia’s contemporary politics in a longer historical perspective. My research interests, which focus on Kashmir—the region that has bedeviled relations between India and Pakistan since 1947—and Islam in South Asia more generally, have allowed me to impress on students the necessity of transcending national boundaries in understanding historical and political processes.

The Reves Center for International Studies has been especially active in recent years in developing long-term institutional, faculty, and student ties with India through study abroad programs, faculty exchanges, and seminar series under the auspices of the India Initiative. In 2010, the College won a U.S. Department of Education grant to increase cooperation between Indian and American universities; this year, the Reves Center coordinated the institutional application for the Obama-Singh Knowledge Initiative grant which will allow us to continue these engagements in the longer term.

South Asian Studies has come a long way at William & Mary since I was hired in 2001. Not only do we have South Asianists in several departments, but we now also offer a South Asian Studies minor. I am currently supervising the College’s first South Asian Studies major, self-designed by my student under the rubric of Interdisciplinary Studies. As a South Asian living and teaching in America, I want to continue to inspire students to think of themselves as an integral part of an increasingly interconnected world.

Chitralekha Zutshi

“As a teacher, I strive to place America’s involvement in the region and South Asia’s contemporary politics in a longer historical perspective.”
Giving to the Reves Center

The Reves Center for International Studies aims to develop, enrich, and promote the international dimensions of learning, teaching, research, and civic engagement at the College of William & Mary. Your kindness and generosity enable us to further this mission by supporting and developing internationally-focused programs for the campus and community. To give support or learn more, please contact Judy Davis by phone at 757-221-3572 or email at jcdav3@wm.edu. Thank you!