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The jonquils, tulips, dogwoods and the rest of the campus’ natural treasures remind us once again that one of the most vital times of the year is upon us at the Reves Center. Students have secured a place in their summer study abroad programs, and instructional faculty are beginning to make arrangements for conducting research all over the world. While most everyone is familiar with the multiple services provided to students by our Global Education Office, one facet of the Reves Center that often escapes notice is the annual awarding of the Reves Fellowships in International Student-Faculty Research and the Reves Fellowships in International Community Engagement and Scholarship.

This year again, the Reves Center is pleased to award these fellowships, and six faculty members will share over $40,000 in pursuing their projects. A committee of five members of the university-wide International Advisory Committee reviewed the many proposals submitted, and the winners will soon begin their work which, in all instances, will involve select undergraduates.

Geographically, our Reves Fellows will be all over the map, in Russia, Argentina, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Nepal. In St. Petersburg, Associate Professor of Russian Studies Alexander Prokhorov and Teaching Filmmaker-in-Residence Jes Therkelsen will collaborate with around ten students in an initiative called “Visualizing St. Petersburg: Urban Environment in Transition.” They will examine several sites in the city currently under redevelopment and document the community’s interpretation of environmental issues as they influence representations of the past as well as affect the region’s ecosystems. Meanwhile, in the southern hemisphere, Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies Silvia Tandeciarz and Associate Professor of History Betsy Konefal will undertake an eleven-month project with six students researching the history and representation of Cold War-era dictatorships in the Southern Cone, especially Argentina. They will conduct archival work in La Plata and Buenos Aires in an effort to illuminate, through documentary evidence, a past that was designed to remain unknown.

Two other faculty members will focus their efforts on projects that involve scholarship and learning through service, community-based research, and civic engagement. Associate Professor of Government Paula Pickering will continue guiding her Bosnia Project. For more than a decade, she and her students have been committed to community engagement in this divided, war-torn region where they work with Bosnian non-governmental activists and university students to teach English and non-violent communication to marginalized youth. Their humanitarian accomplishments in Eastern Europe echo those of another team from W&M, this time in the South Asian country of Nepal where Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Kevin Vose and students plan to investigate the causes of poor long-term maternal and child health in the Achham region, one of the most impoverished in the world. The group will assess health needs and resources then develop a plan for ongoing health promotion in this Himalayan community.

In this issue of World Minded you can read about one of the Research Fellowship projects funded last year and learn where Associate Professor of Education Pamela Eddy’s efforts in China have led. We have also included articles featuring different facets of the Reves Center’s mission spotlight, among others, our international residence, Reves Hall, the very active Distinguished Scholars-in-Residence program, and the life-changing consequences of a study abroad experience.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this report from the Reves Center and keeping up with our many undertakings.

Ron St. Onge
Professor of Modern Languages & Literatures, Emeritus
Interim Director, Reves Center for International Studies
The Past, Present, and Future of Reves Hall

By Eva Wong, Advisor for International Students and Scholars and Jack Cohen ’10, M.A. ’11, Graduate Assistant

At William & Mary, Reves Hall is renowned as the College’s international living-learning community. Reves Hall was founded in April 1989, a renovation of the original Tyler Hall dormitory. In the early days, Reves Hall primarily catered to domestic students who had an interest in global studies or international relations. Today, Reves Hall is truly a cultural melting pot, made up of about 25% international students and the rest a diverse array of domestic students who are passionate about cultural sharing and learning.

Reves Hall was part of the original vision of the founder of the Reves Center, Wendy Reves, and the Center’s first director, Dr. James Bill. Dr. Bill was instrumental in fostering an international community in Reves Hall. Under his leadership, Reves Hall instituted a monthly series of coffee hour lectures—informal global discussions between the hall residents and faculty members. Sarita Talwar ’96 noted that “in another dorm, a hall program might be to watch Seinfeld and have pizza, but in Reves it would be a discussion of Muslim fundamentalism and its impact on the U.S. and around the world.”

Today the legacy of Dr. Bill is still very much alive in Reves Hall. The Reves Center continues to support the hall’s mission by providing the funds for programming and a stipend for a student Programming Coordinator. Aaron Barksdale ’13, current Programming Coordinator for Reves Hall, explains that because the residents come from all over the world and from different regions of the U.S., the residents are able to “bring [their] own unique experiences to the table” and learn from each other. In his role as Programming Coordinator, Aaron is responsible for putting together programs, both educational and social in nature, for the residents. The Spring 2011 programming calendar includes a coffee hour lecture by Prof. Kemi George on the relationship between environmental sustainability and democracy, a Cross-Cultural Training Workshop presented by the Center for Student Diversity, and an international dance night.

Steve Sechrist, Director of International Students, Scholars, and Programs, remarked that “it’s no secret that in today’s global environment, inter-cultural competence plays an increasingly significant role in [students’] professional and social success.” He adds “to develop inter-cultural competence you have to constantly reflect on challenges to your own cultural perspectives and biases.” Thus, it is important that Reves Hall offers a space that encourages students to pursue global scholarship, engage in intellectual debate, and develop cross-cultural competence. Working towards these objectives, the application process for living in the hall was made more competitive this year—applicants were asked to write a narrative about an intercultural experience that changed the way they perceived another group or culture and what they learned from that experience. Applicants were also asked to show their ability to contribute to the intellectual and cultural enrichment of the Reves Hall community by proposing a program for the hall.

There is no doubt that Reves Hall residents enjoy a college experience that differs from most William & Mary students, but it appears that “the greatest strength of Reves Hall…is the body of students that lives there” says Steve Sechrist. He goes on to note that, “in addition to the richness their cultural diversity brings, they are willing to engage in dialogue on issues. Through this dialogue, they help each other develop that inter-cultural competence that will help them succeed in today’s global environment.”
Leading the Way

International Research at the College

By Aaron Gregory ’10, M.A. ’11

What comes to your mind when you think about the Reves Center? Study abroad in over twenty countries? The global village at Reves Hall? Promoting internationally focused events at the College? Serving as a resource to international students and scholars? These are all important aspects of the work done at Reves. However, in keeping with William & Mary’s conviction that commitments to liberal arts education and research are not mutually exclusive, the Reves Center does not only coordinate study abroad programs and cultural events on campus. The Center also supports faculty and student research in international fields.

Associate Professor Pamela Eddy of the William & Mary School of Education is working on one such project. Her research on “Internationalization of the Curriculum at William & Mary: International Collaborations and Partnerships” is one of the seven projects being supported this year by the Reves Faculty Fellows program. Eddy noted that the Faculty Fellows program has generally supported professors who work mostly with undergraduates, whereas several of the School of Education programs only cater to graduate students. The international character of her research and the hosting of a visiting Chinese scholar, Dr. Bihong Li from Hunan University, led her to seek Reves Center support.

Eddy and Li’s research focuses on a question being asked by many professors across the country and across the globe today, “What does it mean to internationalize my classes?” On a larger scale than the classroom, they are also examining internationalizing trends at the campus level. “When you internationalize a campus,” Eddy says, “it can’t just be an add-on.” She notes in particular that the College’s addition of a senior administrative position devoted entirely to internationalization is a concrete example of William & Mary’s commitment in this area. “Our new Vice Provost for International Affairs position is very exciting,” Eddy says “as this puts in place a high level of leadership support and dedication to international efforts on campus.”

She mentions, as a point of context, national research that highlights a continued lack of involvement of U.S. faculty in international research or teaching (e.g., collaboration with

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Dr. Bihong Li, left, visiting scholar from Hunan University in China and Dr. Pamela Eddy, Associate Professor of Education

From HOYWIK School; Kibera, Kenya.
international scholars, research that is international in scope, publishing in foreign countries, or teaching courses with an emphasis on international content). But, she says, William & Mary has cause to celebrate. In the survey of W&M faculty conducted as part of Eddy’s research, about 83% say that their research and teaching incorporates international themes.

Eddy is certainly part of that 83%. Besides conducting research focusing on internationalization in universities, she has also been working with an international scholar on the project: Bihong Li, a visiting scholar from Hunan University in China. Having an international scholar working directly on the project has already expanded its focus. Li has translated and adapted the survey given to W&M faculty and is administering it to faculty at Hunan University. Daina Henry, Director of Special Projects for the W&M Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness, is also administering the survey in the Philippines.

The research, sponsored by the Reves Faculty Fellows Program, also included focus groups with both faculty and students. Preliminary findings show that faculty and students have different ideas about what it means for students to be globally competent and that internationalization is interpreted differently based on the context of discipline. Faculty members in particular were interested in hearing about internationalization efforts on other parts of campus and could envision how interdisciplinary collaborations might emerge.

The comparative aspect of the project, made possible largely by Li’s initiative, is one of the most exciting parts of the study, according to Eddy. “China is investing very heavily in their higher education system,” she points out, “and that investment is showing serious results.” But, she adds, “they still look to our university model, especially in terms of creativity and inventiveness in research.” It will be interesting to learn the extent to which internationalization is taking root in Chinese universities as a vehicle of increased quality of education.

In addition to the Faculty Fellows program, Reves offers funding for distinguished lectures on campus, international conferences, as well as on-campus conferences dealing with international themes. To name just a few of the events the Reves Center has supported this spring: the visit of distinguished musician and gamelan instructor Joko Sutrisno, who spoke to various classes in the music department and performed with the W&M Indonesian Gamelan Ensemble; the hosting of a national interdisciplinary minority studies colloquium; and two talks by Professor Jeremy Black of the University of Exeter (U.K.) on global politics and the history of the “Grand Tour of Europe” often undertaken by young Englishmen in the eighteenth century to gain a better international understanding.

Faculty members are not the only ones who can reap the benefits of Reves support. The Center also offers support for undergraduate and graduate students doing international research or participating in internships with an international focus. Much of the student funding offered by the Reves Center is administered by the Roy R. Charles Center.

For more information on Reves funding opportunities for students and faculty, please see the funding page on the Reves website at www.wm.edu/offices/revescenter/funding/index.php or call the Reves Center at (757) 221-3590.
Former Iraqi Official Visits Campus as Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence

By Aaron Gregory '10, M.A. '11
Some information taken from press release by Jim Ducibella (02/16/2011)

The Reves Center for International Studies recognizes that international interests take many shapes. One of the ways the College has supported international awareness is through the position of the Kraemer Middle East Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence. The Kraemer endowment began with a donation from Richard Kraemer '65 and continues to be supported by his family. The endowment, administered by the Reves Center, supports the appointment of a distinguished scholar in “Islamic law and governance in Islamic states and societies.”

This year’s Kraemer Scholar is Dr. Mishkat Al Moumin, Iraq’s former Minister of Environment and founder of the Women and the Environment Organization (WATEO), which seeks to empower the rural women of Iraq to participate in the environmental decision-making process. As part of her appointment, Dr. Al Moumin spent five days in Williamsburg giving lectures, attending seminars, and meeting students and faculty at the College.

Her lectures covered such topics as “The Status of Human Rights in Iraq Post-Saddam” and “Promoting Women’s Rights in an Islamic Society.” She also spoke to students in the “Introduction to Islam” course taught by Kenan Professor of Humanities and Religious Studies Tamara Sonn, speaking on “Islam and Protection of the Environment.”

Dr. Al Moumin received an M.A. and Ph.D. in public international law from the University of Baghdad. She also recently earned a second Master’s degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Prior to 2004, there was no Ministry of the Environment in Iraq. Dr. Al Moumin designed the entire structure of the ministry and developed environmental law, while also serving as an advocate for women’s issues in Iraq.

We thank Dr. Al Moumin for sharing her experience and knowledge with the William & Mary community, and the Kraemer family for making her presence here possible. Mr. Kraemer’s family also supports the Kraemer Scholarships which support study or research in Great Britain or Ireland.

International Student Gains New Perspective at VIMS

By Stephen Sechrist, Director of International Students, Scholars, and Programs

Ask anyone who has lived abroad and they will likely respond that the impact of that experience is evident in various aspects of their life. The experience may have led them to appreciate cultural differences more intentionally, to pursue study in a field they had not previously considered, or, as in this story, to refine their own understanding of their career.

Ana Pimenta Verissimo Ph.D. ’11 came to the U.S. in 2005 to pursue a doctoral degree at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. A native of Portugal, she had always yearned to live and study abroad for an extended period. The strong reputation of U.S. graduate programs and scientific research in general made the U.S. especially attractive. When she was selected for a scholarship under the Fulbright program, coming to VIMS was an “easy decision,” she says.

Long fascinated by the diversity and complexity of the marine environment, Ana’s interest in the biology of the unique deep-sea habitat was sparked during her undergraduate program when she had the chance to study the Portuguese dogfish, a species of deep-sea shark. At VIMS she has pursued this interest further through her dissertation research, which employs population genetics to help us understand how deep-sea species survive in such a harsh environment.

Reflecting on her experience studying in the U.S., she notes that “the relationship between faculty and students is much more informal.” This, she says, “leads to an easier transfer of knowledge and experiences.” She adds that the overall openness of the environment in which faculty work here leads to a more fluid interchange of ideas and easier collaborations than she has witnessed in other research settings.

Ana’s experience at VIMS has not only shaped her view of how scientists should relate to each other but also how their work relates to society as a whole. She used to regard research as a sphere somewhat isolated, reserved for scientific or academic audiences. “During my years here,” she says, “I have been able to appreciate research as the pursuit of answers to relevant questions with an impact on society or on the advancement of our global knowledge.”

To incoming international students, she offers the following advice: “Work hard and work well. Don’t be afraid to speak your mind and to discuss your own ideas, and take advantage of all the opportunities to meet your peers and to work with others.” Ana still plans to return to Portugal to continue her research career, and will take with her a changed view of academic culture and the relationship between science and society. Her stay in the U.S. has definitely helped to shape that view.
“You came to Singapore to study the arts?! Does Singapore even have art?” That’s the typical response I received from most people when I told them why I decided to study abroad fall semester of 2010 at the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Most people who study at NUS major in science or business because Singapore is known as one of the top financial centers in the world as well as being a leader in scientific research. But I was more interested in Singapore’s recent push to become a cultural ‘hot spot.’ Singapore is a relatively young country; it just celebrated 45 years of independence last August. And only recently, in the 1990s, did the nation start promoting its arts scene. In fact, the Esplanade, Singapore’s premier performing arts venue, just opened in 2002.

My own interest in the arts stems from my training as a dancer, and I also chose Singapore because I am Asian American. I wanted to see how a nation that is set in the East can be ‘Westernized’ so successfully. English is the main language of instruction in Singapore and a large percentage of the population is foreign—coming from countries all over the world, not just surrounding Asian nations. The friends I made while studying abroad in Singapore came from Denmark, Uruguay, India, Australia, and Germany—and that’s just a very small portion of the students at NUS.

I have a self-designed major at the College of William & Mary called “Asian Studies and the Arts.” I am fascinated with dance ethnography—understanding the culture of a country through movement—and Singapore provided me with the perfect opportunity to conduct my first field research. Through W&M’s exchange program with NUS, I was able to tailor coursework that would also count towards an Honors Thesis research. I watched performances at the Esplanade and took dance classes with local modern dance groups such as: T.H.E Dance Company, NUS Dance Ensemble, and NUS Dance Synergy. But I think the biggest opportunity studying abroad at NUS gave me was taking a class in visual ethnography where my professor asked us to make a 10-minute film. I decided to interview a local performer named Gani Karim and through him I was able to get a personal account of what life is like for an artist in Singapore. I think my biggest revelation was realizing that although Singapore is known for its rules and regulations, the artists in Singapore offer an alternative. They are able to cross boundaries that are considered outrageous in normal society. For example, Gani is not ashamed to say that he takes pole dancing classes because he sees it as ‘performance art,’ but the other male students in his class—who work at ‘regular’ jobs—are more reluctant to vocalize their participation in such a controversial activity.

Studying in Singapore has not only helped strengthen my graduate school applications and reinforced my career plans in dance ethnography, it introduced me to unique friends and experiences which will stay with me for a lifetime. Why would I not go to Singapore to study the arts?