INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL SERVICE PROGRAM (ICSP)

Biographical Sketches of Speakers for the 2010–2011 Academic Year

Brighten up your classroom, organization or office with an international speaker! The students listed on the following pages are available for no expense to speak on a range of topics. As selected participants in the International Cultural Service Program, they receive tuition scholarships in exchange for each providing a minimum of 80 hours per academic year of cultural and educational service to the state of Oregon.

In addition to regular 30-40 minute presentations, these "cultural ambassadors" can address issues of development, contrast traditional and modern lifestyles, translate material, interpret, and coach sports. They can adapt their material to suit specific needs and interests. Students have remarked repeatedly about the value of interacting with Americans on and off campus. They appreciate the opportunity to share information about their countries and look forward to meeting Oregonians on a more personal basis.

COUNTRIES represented for the 2010-2011 academic year include:

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AVAILABILITY: International students, in most cases, will not be available on holidays and during the following periods:

- November 25th – November 26th: Thanksgiving Break
- December 6th – January 2nd: Final Exams and Winter Break
- March 14th – March 27th: Final Exams and Spring Break
- June 6th – 10th: Final Exams and End of Term

To schedule a student speaker, submit an ICSP speaker request form or for faster processing, make requests online. Visit our website, create a log-in and password, a profile (you only need to do this the first time), and then you can make requests and track their “progress.” Visit http://oregonstate.edu/international/ICSP/users/login and create your account.

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Transportation: Requesters arrange to transport their speaker to/from OSU’s campus. The pick-up location is in the parking area of Callahan Hall, off of Jefferson Street near 15th. Students will wait in the “U” shaped drive, near the parking meters. See map of pick-up location above.
Suggestions to help K-12 teachers & other groups prepare for an ICSP visitor

- Determine the topics you want the ICSP student to discuss. Specifying family life, environment, religion, holidays, celebrations, political system, education, changing traditions, etc. provides a focus for the student’s preparation. **Please allow 2 weeks advance notice of requests**, to ensure availability. Please note that if you must change the date of your request less than 2 weeks prior to the event, we may not be able to re-schedule a speaker for you.

- In order to make the ICSP visit as meaningful and accessible as possible for the guest speaker and audience, K-12 classes should have no more than 40 (and preferably fewer) students.

- Consider scheduling a day of activities at the Corvallis Multicultural Literacy Center at 128 9th street. The Center regularly works with ICSP students for educational forums and activities, and can accommodate crafts, cooking and hands-on activities for children or teens. Contact the CMLC directly to schedule a day and time, and they can help coordinate your ICSP student speakers or topics. 754-7225 or cmlc@peak.org

- If a parent volunteer or staff member arranges a student visit, make sure that each teacher knows what topics have already been decided upon and, thus what to expect of the ICSP presentation. Please make sure substitutes and any others involved know what has been pre-arranged (pick-up time, topics to be addressed, time, etc.)

- Have the necessary audio-visual equipment set up and in working order, or confirm with the student that they will be bringing a computer and/or projector (a malfunctioning LCD projector or laptop can waste precious time.) Arrange a display table for display items.

- Arrange transportation for the ICSP guest to and from the University (see page 1 for pick-up location.) School staff, retired educators, and parent volunteers might help drive. **Please make sure that you know the name and Driver's License number of the person providing transport, and that you inform the ICSP Office at least one week in advance of this information.**

- Even though each student has been carefully screened and chosen for the ICSP, they are not teachers and, therefore, should be expected to give **no more than two presentations in a row.**

- If several talks are scheduled, please see that the student is given a short break and water.

- If ICSP students speak to several classes, it is best to have the children change rooms so that display items already set up do not have to be moved. Having to move and set up twice cuts into the limited time scheduled for the guest speaker.

- When scheduling for an International Day or Fair, ICSP students have commented that more than three presentation times leaves audiences tired and distracted during the last rotations.

- Please stay in the classroom, or ensure that a **responsible adult is present**, to discipline when needed. Showing an active interest in the speaker helps make the ICSP student feel welcome.

- If possible, **debrief** your students after the presentation to assess the impact of the international speaker and re-enforce lesson goals. ICSP guest speakers are delighted to receive thank you cards from students.

**SCHEDULING a Presentation:** Let us know if you have trouble with the online request system, or if you like you may still submit paper copies of requests. We will, in the end, enter those into our online system (so that the student speakers can access information about the request in a more timely manner), so indicate an email address if possible, where a confirmation of your request may be sent.

**AFTER a Presentation:** Please complete and return an evaluation form after the presentation. These forms are now available and may be filled out online. Constructive comments let the international guest know what aspects of the talk were most valuable and what might be improved. Evaluation forms are available from the speaker, or to download go to: [http://oregonstate.edu/international/ICSP/](http://oregonstate.edu/international/ICSP/)

Thank you for your support of ICSP student ambassadors. We hope this is a rewarding experience for you and these uniquely qualified students. Let us know what you think!
MOHAMED FARHAD  Available Fall Term Only  Kabul AFGHANISTAN

Major: Biology / Pre-Med, Senior
Languages: Dari, Urdu, Farsi, Pashtu
Experience: Translator, U.S. Army (Afghanistan); Red Cross fundraising; Portland Community College Diversity Advocacy Board; PCC International Student Panel; PCC bookstore cashier
Family: 3 brothers, 4 sisters
Age: 23

With great sincerity, Farhad conveys to his audience the historical and current political challenges facing Afghans, and the rich traditions that have long persevered. From environmental issues to agriculture, Farhad frankly describes the struggle for food, population issues, and human rights in his conflicted nation. He discusses the changing role of women, government and education, and frankly discusses the U.S.’s ever-complicated role in the stabilization of the region. Farhad presents cultural handicrafts, national clothing (including a demonstration of the turban), games, dance, and music as an overview of the vibrant cultures alive in much of Afghanistan. Special occasions such as weddings, holidays such as Eid and Ramadan, photos and discussion of family life complete the gripping portrait Mohamed “Farhad” paints of this struggling, beautiful nation.

KRISTINA MILAJ  Shkoder, ALBANIA

Major: Civil Engineering, freshman
Languages: Albanian
Experience: KidSpirit volunteer, Albanian Alps Institute volunteer
Education: Santiam Christian High School (2009-10); Albanian Alps Institute U.S. Study Scholarship program recipient
Age: 19

Kristina’s experience and the challenges she faced in coming to study at OSU are noteworthy, and she unflinchingly shares the story of being the first girl in her rural village to attend High School, let alone go on to Higher Education. Kristina’s upbringing in a traditional Alpine village has given her a set of skills, perspectives and motivation unlike many University students today. She shares with audiences the customary roles of women in her village, and the religious and political persecution of Albanians under communism. She can demonstrate needlework, cooking, traditional clothing and music (she can bring and demonstrate the “Cifteli”), and also describes changes to the long-established customs with which she was raised. She shares about village farming, garden and animal care, and ballads (“Grandma’s stories”), as well as a glimpse into Albanian movies and pictures. A butter churn, Coffee mill and wool handicrafts complete her engaging and heartfelt presentation on Albania today.

VIRGINIA RAFFAELE  Available Fall Term Only  Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA

Major: Biology, Senior
Awards: Certificate for Outstanding Achievement in Economics, Student of the Year: Outstanding Achievement (U.S. Marine Corps); Students of Merit 2006: American Chemical Society selection Outstanding Student in Chemistry (Scio H.S.)
Languages: Spanish
Family: 1 brother, 1 sister
Age: 22

Virginia presents the rich history of Argentina as well as the contemporary popular culture and unique political, regional, and economic issues facing her country today. Very knowledgeable of the arts, Virginia proudly discusses the Argentine contributions to the world of literature and the visual and performing arts. Virginia can present the cuisine of Argentina and prepare mate, the choice daily beverage of many Argentinians. She can prepare typical dishes of Argentina, present traditional regional clothing and costumes, and share CDs illustrating a variety of music from her native Argentina. Virginia can teach Brazilian dance, and demonstrate belly-dancing as well. Her lively and colorful presentations exemplify the verve of South American culture.
VAHAGN AZARYAN
Charentsavan, ARMENIA

Major: New Media Communication and Graphics Design, Junior
Awards: 2007 Olympian of English language winner; Regional Olympiad of Russian 2007; 2005 US State Dept. FLEX exchange scholar;
Experience: ISOSU Co-Director, 2010-11; 2006 National Civic Education Workshop, Washington DC; Oregon 4-H; OSU 4-H Summer Conference; 4-H Junior Toastmasters
Languages: Armenian, Russian
Family: 1 brother
Age: 20

Vahagn eagerly shares the rich history of his native Armenia, including ancient architecture, literature, poetry, music, politics, traditions, holidays, cuisine, or “just about any topic you like!” He brings a zeal for sharing with a wide variety of age groups, school classes or community organizations, and has had much experience doing so. Vahagn can illustrate contemporary life with photos and currency, and give a historical perspective with antiques or replicas, and compare educational systems and politics in Armenia and the U.S. He enjoys cooking and can teach or demonstrate traditional Armenian dishes. A talented painter and artist, Vahagn teaches drawing or painting as well.

FARID ABBASOV
Sumqayit, AZERBAIJAN

Major: Industrial Engineering, minor: Business, Senior
Education: Crescent Valley High School (FLEX exchange program); Qafqaz University (Azerbaijan), 2005-07
Languages: Azerbaijani, Turkish, Russian
Age: 21

Farid introduces the “Land of Fire,” with history dating back to the 5th Century A.D., as the gateway connecting Asia, Europe, and the Middle-East. Rich in natural resources, his country spans a “Western” and Muslim cultural divide, with industries like winemaking existing among diverse Islamic, Christian and Jewish citizens. Farid describes environmental issues, traditional and modern lifestyles, the role of women in contemporary families, education and the rich cuisines influenced by Turkish and Arabic inhabitants. A tea ceremony, samples of Azeri music and pictures of daily attire and life complete his thoughtful and informative view of Azerbaijan.

SIMONE NSUTEZO FOBI
Bamenda, CAMEROON

Major: Business and Environmental Engineering, Junior
Languages: Bafut, French, Spanish
Experience: MUN College Magazine Editor; ROTARACT & French Clubs; “Sub-Zero Fun Fair” fundraiser organizer; Global Leadership Adventures (South Africa); Dedeny Rural Development Project (Ghana), African Student Assn Event Coord.
Family: 3 brothers, 3 sisters
Age: 20

Simone is the youngest of 7 children and is fortunate to have lived in Burkina Faso, Ghana and her native West African nation of Cameroon during her young life. She has volunteered in development projects, mastered cultural dances from various African countries, and cooks, tells folk stories, sings and teaches games to audiences. She can address topics including: Effects of Poor Leadership in Africa; Difficulties Faced by African Children; Stigmatizations and False Perceptions of Africa; African Works of Art (Literary, Music, Dance, Food); Cultural Preservation for African Youth (the influence of American culture); Aid versus Trade; Causes and Effect of Genocide; diseases of Africa such as Onchocerciasis (river blindness), and the Deteriorating Infrastructure and its Effects on Cameroon. Simone’s enthusiasm for her subject matter brings these topics to life, and she compliments her presentations by modeling traditional clothing and sharing music, coins and games from Cameroon and beyond.
EKDARA SIN                  Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA
Major: General Science (Pre-Pharmacy), Senior
Languages: Cambodian (Khmer)
Experience: Library Assistant (OSU & PCC), Volunteer for American Cancer Society;
           OSU Cambodian Student Association
Family: 1 sisters and 2 brothers
Age: 25

Ekdara is among the first generation in his family to study at University, and has embraced education and the opportunities at OSU with relish and enthusiasm. He describes some of the vivid contrasts between rural and urban life in Cambodia, and illustrates the centuries-old technologies used in rice farming, as well as challenges in schooling rural villages face during the rainy season. For mature audiences, Edkara frankly describes the difficulties his family experienced when so many relatives died in the “Killing Regime” of the 1970s, and the poor educational system in place which omits large portions of Cambodia’s troubled modern history. He relishes the opportunity to share with Americans some amazing foods, such as insects (crickets, beetles, tarantulas), exotic fruits, and more. Wedding ceremonies and Buddhist traditions round out his colorful and frequently delightful view of Cambodia.

FEI DING                   Qingdao, CHINA
Major: Accounting, Senior
Experience: Resident Assistant; High School Exchange student (Brownsville)
Languages: Mandarin, Japanese (basic)
Awards: College of Business 2009 honored student; High school homecoming queen
Age: 22

Fei’s lively presentations touch on topics ranging from government policies such as “late marriage” or “one child” (and the benefits and abuse of each), economic and social diversity, family life in villages and cities, and differences between Chinese and U.S. economies. She enjoys cooking, and can share about the history and importance of tea throughout China, describe regional cuisines, and share “real” Chinese foods with small groups. For children, Fei can demonstrate paper cuttings, “civilian paintings for ordinary families,” describe traditional myths, share Peking opera music, and show an interesting way to count to 100 with two hands. Additional activities include bamboo brush pen and ink, bamboo flute, card games and Mahjong.

WING CHUNG “JEFFREY” TSANG  Hong Kong, CHINA
Major: Food Science and Technology, Freshman
Experience: Boys Scout, English Tutor (Hong Kong), Community Service
Languages: Cantonese, Mandarin
Awards: Colors Award for Music, Principal’s Award, Certificate of Commendation: Art and Design (King George V School, Hong Kong)
Family: 1 sister
Age: 17

“Jeffrey” eagerly anticipates the opportunity to introduce Americans to different kinds of Chinese cuisine, through cooking demonstrations and descriptions of foods and their symbolism during festivals and wedding celebrations. His appreciation for the arts is evident in his colorful overview of Chinese paintings, architecture and festivals in “old” and contemporary Hong Kong, including descriptions of Hong Kong’s days as a fishing village to the dazzling festivities of Chinese New Year. Jeffrey can engage young audiences with craft projects such as paper cutting, and give an overview of dynasties and Emperors, and offer a look at China from Imperial to Modern history. Landmarks, the daily life of people, fables, memorabilia from colonial Hong Kong, children’s games, traditional clothes, vintage and contemporary photos complete his vivid look at the island of Hong Kong.
XIAOMIN "MYLIE" TONG  Shanghai, CHINA

Major: Industrial Engineering, M.S.
Experience: English tutor; Associate Applications Engineer (computer science); OSU Business Solutions Group, Test Engineer; Piano tutor
Education: Shanghai Polytechnic University (04-08), B.S Mechanical & Electronic Eng.;
Languages: Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese
Age: 24

"Mylie" hails from the self-described “After-Eighty” generation, born in the intersection between old and new China, and gives a fascinating overview of the “only child” generation, which consists of many “Little Emperors,” full of confidence but pressured to excel. Her overview of contemporary issues in China includes the Chinese view of the U.S., censorship, the recent Real Estate boom and other economic factors driving modern China today. The 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, contemporary fashions and the impact of low salaries on marriage and family are among the topics she can present in the context of “Where China is going.” Asian popular music and software applications will appeal to teens and young people, who will also enjoy learning about “Shai Ke,” or the practice of “putting everything under the sunshine,” in modern day blogs and a variety of social media sites.

JINGQING "BENNY" KANG  Hong Kong, CHINA

Major: Graphics Design, Junior
Experience: Graphic Designer & Photographer, the Daily Barometer (2010); Olympics Equestrian Youth Ambassador (Hong Kong Jockey Club), 2008
Languages: Mandarin, Cantonese
Awards: OSU Art Department Excellence in Drawing Award, 2010; 33rd Hong Kong Youth Cultural Arts Competition, 2008; Hong Kong Youth Slogan & Poster Design Competition: Award of Distinction
Age: 20

“Benny” provides a glimpse at the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, which is a Capitalist society with low taxation and free-trade, and it’s leading financial system among Asia. He juxtaposes this with a look at complimentary East/West cultures, including the practice of Feng Shui and how it can make or break a business’s success. Religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, Night Life in “The City that Never Sleeps,” Festivals unique to HK and the Educational system which requires proficiency in three languages are topics to engage most any audience. Cooking and descriptions of Dim Sum, lessons in the Dragon Dance, and handicrafts, coins, film and music complete his well-rounded view of the Chinese Island/City/State of Hong Kong.

ANDRES CARDENAS  Guanacaste, COSTA RICA

Major: Public Health, MPH
Experience: Peer tutor in Chemistry, Math, Spanish and disability services, UCC 2006-2008
Languages: Spanish
Awards: Umpqua Community College Outstanding Student in Biological Science 2008, Umpqua Community College President’s Honor Roll 2006-2008
Family: 2 brothers
Age: 22

Andres hails from the Northwest part of Costa Rica, the colonial town of Nicoya, where he describes the outlook on life is “Pura Vida,” or living “the Pure Life.” He describes the origin of this phrase, and the coining of the term “Costa Rica” (“Rich Coast”), which is antithetical to daily life, as people along the coastline are usually not wealthy. A culture rich in traditions, and he describes local customs and holidays, and also modern issues such as the impact of globalization and tourism. He describes CAFTA, modern democracy, and the impact of 1.5 million U.S. visitors on the economy. From a Catholic background, Andres can discuss practices established in the colonial period, teach traditional games, and share folk stories. A lover of the outdoors and raised on a farm, he can discuss the biodiversity of the country, traditional beverage and foods. Currency, maps, crafts, a flag, DVDs, Power Point, postcards, pictures and music complete his earnest and passionate presentation on Costa Rica.
PHILIP HILLEBRAND  

Available Fall Term Only  

Kerpen, GERMANY

**Major:** Biology (Pre-Med), International Degree, Senior  
**Experience:** Exorior GmbH 2005-2006 (financial planning company), Luftwaffe Air Force 2006-2007; German tutor  
**Family:** 2 brothers, 12 sisters (no, that is not a typ-o!)  
**Languages:** German, Spanish, Latin  
**Age:** 23

Philip adeptly shares with American audiences a view of post-war Germany from traditional to contemporary cultural practices. He describes German Geography, history from the middle ages to present, World War II and its influence on modern Germany, and politics including mandatory military service and its problems. Philip is interested in sports and the history of sports, religious issues, and can speak about the German school system, Germany’s social system, and the American influence on German society and culture. For young audiences, German legends and fairy tales, songs and popular music of today may be of interest. He also has children’s books and toys, pictures, handcrafts, and can coach soccer.

MARIA WEBER  

Berlin, GERMANY

**Major:** Psychology, Freshman  
**Experience:** People to People European Youth Forum Ambassador (2007); PtPI Haitian Relief Fundraiser; SOLD OUT Drama Club; “Work for Peace” benefit, Germany  
**Education:** Santiam Christian School  
**Family:** 3 Siblings  
**Languages:** German  
**Age:** 19

Maria’s family is originally from East Berlin, and she shares personal stories of her father’s experience under communist rule, and frankly discusses inter-family disagreements about communism and it’s role in Germany’s culture. East/West cultural divides, the “toughness” of those who endured hardships under communism, “stasi” (spies), imprisonment for fabricated crimes, and the emotional strain on citizens who were reluctant to complain are personal narratives she relates in a look at recent history. Maria also cheerfully describes cultural traditions, daily life and social customs, holidays and religion, and German bakery goods such as cookies, brown breads, and can cook simple meals or foods. She can demonstrate traditional dances such as “So ein Schoener Tag,” language lessons, typical figurines such as “Hummels,” and greetings. Maria’s warmth and passionate descriptions of Germany as it was and is today will have you planning your next event with her on the schedule.
MARIO ENRIQUE GOMEZ FERNANDEZ
Zacapa, GUATEMALA

Major: Nuclear Engineering, Sophomore
Experience: AFS Exchange Student—Germany, 2006-2007, Swimming Medalist (Venezuela)
Education: Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, 2008-09 (Engineering)
Family: 1 Sister
Languages: Spanish, German
Age: 20

Mario originates from the “Land of Eternal Spring,” sunny and multicultural Guatemala, famous for Mayan ruins and exotic natural beauty. He takes great delight in sharing about the 23 languages and variety of indigenous cultures in Guatemala today, as well as Pre-Colombian people who inhabited the city of Antigua, and the many archaeological wonders such as the pyramids of Tikal. He compares native culture with his own, and discusses gender and family relationships, demonstrating levels of respect, and describes social class and rural/urban differences. Mario loves to cook, and demonstrates how to prepare foods such as chicken in sour cream, soups, cheese pie and tamales, or sometimes creates his own recipes building upon Guatemalan flavors and utilizing local ingredients. He also enjoys dance, and can show audiences or small groups a variety of dances including salsa, bachata and marimba, and can lead groups in games such as “tenta and tenta frutas.”

NEHA NEELWARNE
Mysore, INDIA

Major: Finance and English Literature, Senior
Experience: Bollywood Faculty/Staff Fitness Instructor; School Council Treasurer; Boarding School Prefect; Conductor of school Jazz band; plays trumpet & sitar
Education: Hebron school, Tamil Nadu
Languages: Kannada, Hindi
Age: 21

Neha cheerfully introduces Indian culture through the vibrancy of traditional music, dance, and her colorful displays of handicrafts, her sitar, saris and jewelry. Neha can play folk tunes on the Sitar, has been learning classical dance for several years, and has also learned European style jazz and classical orchestra music as part of her training in an international school. She can discuss religions and differences in ways of life across India, the role of women in modern India and ensuing identity “crises”, dowry and arranged marriage, and ancient folklore. She can cook delicious meals, talk about the beliefs and uses of various spices, demonstrate 3 ways of wearing a sari, and also provide dramatic readings of Indian poetry and literature. Classical sitar music, Bollywood selections and an assortment of handicrafts, books, coins, stamps, dance costumes and posters complete her vivid look at the culture of the sub-continent.

SONIKA COOMAR
INDIA/ Geneva, SWITZERLAND

Major: Computer Science, Junior
Experience: Broader Engagement Program Scholarship, 2009 Supercomputing Conference
Languages: Hindi, Bengali, German, French
Awards: Oregon State Computer Science Scholarship; Swiss Federal Honor for achievement in long-range shooting; 2007-08 Silver Medalist for Shooting, Switzerland
Age: 21

Born and raised in Switzerland, Sonika retains a deep connection to her roots in India, and thus considers herself bi-cultural and multi-national, as well as a multi-lingual Swiss citizen. She notes the similarities between the two seemingly divergent cultures, in that both require students to learn in excess of three languages, and that in both countries this multi-lingualism is powerful. Sonika discusses the educational system (in either country), as well as history, music, geography, sports, economics and current events in Switzerland, as well as a focus on banking. Having an insider’s knowledge of India, she describes rural and urban development, dance, movies and child labor there, as well as food. Sonika can teach any of the languages she speaks, and also enjoys cooking a variety of foods from both nations. Traditional and modern lifestyles as well as the changing role of women complete her unique and personal look at both nations.
AZADEH ZEKRI ESFAHANI
Esfahan, IRAN

Major: M.S. Electrical & Computer Engineering
Education: B.S., Computer Hardware Engineering, Esfahan Iran
Experience: Head of Regional Data and Computer Center of Esfahan Municipality; Internet Network Assistant, Esfahan Municipality, Iran; Computer programming
Languages: Farsi, basic Arabic
Family: Married: 2 brothers, 1 sister
Age: 27

Azadeh delights audiences with a look at the Persian customs, traditions and modern practices in her native Iran. She shares colorful aspects of holidays and festivals such as Nowruz (New Year), with photos of family life, foods and symbolic gifts offered to friends and family. Azadeh likes to cook, and can teach small groups how to cook simple dishes, and explain the significance of various ingredients and presentation styles. She is also prepared to talk about Iran’s history, women’s lives in modern day Iran, the Educational system (and differences with those in the U.S.), and the history and styles of dance in Persia. For children she can lead games, share music, dance clips and the Iranian alphabet. Azadeh’s warmth and gentility suit her well to most any interested group or classroom.

AHMAD SHARIFPOUR
Fishvar, IRAN

Major: M.B.A
Education: B.S., Computer Science (OSU)
Experience: Student help desk (P.C.C), lab assistant (INTO, OSU)
Languages: Arabic, Farsi (Persian)
Family: Married, 1 child
Age: 25

Ahmad brings the rich and beautiful culture of Iran to life in his engaging and delightful talk on Nowrooz—Iranian New Year. Neither National nor religious, Nowrooz is celebrated in other countries as well, and Ahmad describes festivities such as “Red Wednesday,” which involves leaping over a fire, and the preparation families undergo in sprouting wheat, cleaning, and giving new clothes or money. Ahmad can talk about schooling differences, Religious differences between Sunni and Shi’a, Weddings in both communities, and the significance of Ramadan and other holidays. He outlines the Iranian Revolution and select other historical periods in Iran’s long history. Games, a look at the Persian alphabet, pictures, foods, currency, music and dance clips, calligraphy and handicrafts complete his thoughtful presentation on modern-day “Persia” or Iran.

AKIYOSHI SAITO
Hiroshima, JAPAN

Major: M.B.A.
Education: B.S., Business, Shinshu University 2006-2009
Experience: Japanese tutor (University of Cebu, Japan), Sales Manager (Nojima Denki), History and Math tutor (Nagano, Japan); M.C., OSU Japan Night
Languages: Japanese
Family: 1 brother
Age: 25

Akiyoshi is delighted to talk with American audiences about Japanese culture, from ancient traditions to modern life in the city. His grandfather was a fisherman, and Akiyoshi can talk about the life of the fisherman and Japanese historical events in general, including a look at architecture, traditional clothing and ancient practice of Judo. He is comfortable as well talking about current Japanese economic and political issues, modern fashions and animé, which captures the attention of youth worldwide. Akiyoshi’s mother had a television cooking show, and he himself has been cooking since he was 8 years old, and is especially adept at seafood dishes. He can demonstrate or teach calligraphy, rugby, soccer or baseball, as well as Judo, and enjoys working with children and adults of all ages.
BRIAN GATIMU
Nairobi, KENYA

Major: Biochemistry and Biophysics, Junior
Experience: Member of Antioch House (OSU); FISA Sports Academy soccer (Nairobi, Kenya); African Students Association President (2010-2011, OSU)
Languages: Kikuyu, Swahili, French
Family: 1 Brother
Age: 21

Brian brings East African culture to life for audiences through his lively presentations on the equatorial nation of Kenya. He describes Kenyans as humble and shy, but disciplined and friendly, and he shares some of the key differences between Tribal communities including the Masai, Kikuru, Bantu, Nilot, Kushai and Semat people - and the more Westernized city-dwellers of Nairobi. Brian shares some of the rich traditions such as drumming, singing and colorful attire, and also the national obsession with soccer. He discusses the era of colonization and what generations since Independence have done to assert their individual identities in everyday life, sometimes creating conflict between Western and Traditional cultural practices. Brian describes the Kenyan flag and the importance of the shield and spear, illustrates musical instruments and artwork, and shares samples of Kenyan choir music and wildlife, religion and family life. His enthusiasm for the subject draws his audience in.

LILY MWANDIRA
Lilongwe, MALAWI

Major: Nutrition, Sophomore
Education: Corvallis High School (grad: 2008); LBCC, 2008-09
Experience: Entertainment prefect (Marymount Sec. Sch., Malawi), Tutor, CEF counselor (First Baptist Church, Corvallis)
Family: 1 Sister, 2 Brothers
Languages: Chichewa, Tumbuka, French
Age: 20

Lily hails from the stunning Southeast African nation of Malawi, and relates cultural practices and traditions through song, story, music and vivid descriptions of rituals and events. Lily describes a traditional village practice of “girls initiation,” which is provided to girls age seven and older, where morals, gestures of respect and skills such as “how to be a good wife” are taught. She speaks frankly about how these traditions are changing and of the choices families must make between education and culture for girls. Lily enjoys cooking and can talk about the typical ingredients used, show photos and show videotapes of dances or teach simple steps. She can also give audiences a colorful look at Malawian culture through traditional garments, drums, storybooks and artifacts.

LUIS LOPEZ
Guadalajara, MEXICO

Major: Food Science, Junior
Experience: Member of Institute of Industrial Eng. community service volunteer
Awards: Deans Honor List (OSU), National Honor Society
Family: 1 brother
Languages: Spanish
Age: 21

Luis is from the Mexican state of Jalisco, and offers audiences a look at the 50+ native languages and peoples of his country, with a look at cultural differences and geographic features of each region. He describes the ancient ruins, centuries-old styles of ceramics and glassware still produced today, leather-working and the tradition of using spicy peppers for cooking (even offering to demonstrate or share some simple side dishes common in Jalisco). He can share pictures of his community and videos of dances popular in the region. National security, family, religion, history and other topics appropriate for High School students can be presented alongside samples of folkloric music or games that reinforce Spanish words and phrases. Luis is passionate about soccer, and would gladly help with coaching, or even share a bit about the rodeo-like sport of Charreada, which is popular.
Daniel López Echevarría, Queretaro, MEXICO

Major: Electrical Engineering, PhD
Education: BS at the Instituto Tecnológico de Queretaro, 1990-95; MS at the Centro de Investigación en Ciencia Aplicada y Tecnología Avanzada del Instituto Politécnico Nacional 2001-04 (Applied Science and Advanced Technology Center)
Experience: National Center of Metrology; Espectrophotometry Lab (CENAM) Queretaro; Electrical Measurements & Standards Lab; Test Lab R&D center MABE Queretaro.
Awards: National Best Thesis among the Institutes of Technology 1998, Top ten poster
Languages: Spanish
Age: 37

Daniel describes regional sixteenth century history of Queretaro, including architectural and cultural influences of the city considered one of the most beautiful places in Mexico. He readily addresses difficult issues such as emigration, the economy, religious beliefs - past and present, as well as politics and government. Special topics include street children, poverty, the impact and influence of tourism and the education of women and children. He has a traditional dance outfit called “concheros” that can be modeled by audience members, and brings traditional games for children, pictures of his region and family, and can show how to cook some traditional dishes or beverages. The Mexican national flag, currency, children’s books, handicrafts, toys, and postcards further enliven his talks.

Dipanker Shrestha Tamang, Kathmandu, NEPAL

Major: Business Administration, Senior
Experience: ISOSU Leadership Team, 2009-10; United Nations Fund for Population Activities, Intern 2010; Peer Leadership Consultant 2010-11; Shtrii Shakti volunteer (community disaster management);
Awards: OSU Dean’s List, Honor Roll, 2006-07; International Provost Award 2006-07; Henraj Gyawaly Trophy for extra-curricular activities (2003); Hugh & Helen Wood Memorial Scholarship
Languages: Nepali, Hindi, Newari
Age: 22

Dipanker brings to life the mosaic of people, cultures and beliefs in his native Nepal, situated in the Himalayas. Newari foods, events such as the 5 Day Festival of Lights, religious practices such as the painting of Buddhist Thankas, and Faith healers (Jhankaris or Shamans) are only a few of the topics Dipanker can share. He describes the ethnic and linguistic diversity of areas near the Himalayas, Hindu mythology and architecture, development and gender issues like discrimination, and the passionate political beliefs of young people in this historically monarchic, developing democracy. He plays a bamboo flute, shares folk stories, Thanka paintings, a singing bowl and national clothing.

Suzanna Shakya, Kathmandu, NEPAL

Major: Civil Engineering, Sophomore
Education: Portland Community College (Civil Engineering)
Experience: Rotaract Club member, swimming instructor, Violin player
Family: 1 brother
Languages: Nepali, Hindi, Newari
Age: 22

Suzanna introduces the Caste system in Nepal, its structure, and the differences between American and Nepalese culture, especially in terms of opportunities to succeed. She can teach about the myths behind some of the celebrations such as the festival of Tihar, and cook foods such as meat or lentil dishes that are eaten on special occasions. Adults will be interested to know about Nepal’s transition from a monarchy to a republic, and she can also discuss controversial practices such as child marriage, gender inequality and superstitions and their role in daily life. Teens might be interested to see how the styles of clothing are different in the cities and rural villages, or learn some of the folk dances that Suzanna can demonstrate. Folk stories and violin music complete her sincere and engaging presentation on Nepal.
OLUWAFUNSHO FARINDE  
Kwara State, NIGERIA

Major: M.S. Civil Engineering
Education: B.S., University of Ilorin (Nigeria)
Experience: Civil Engineering intern (Bulet International, Encon International, Nigeria), Civil Engineer (Earth Surveys & Design Limited, Nigeria), Customer Care Team Leader (Globacom Limited), Affiliate member, American Society of Civil Eng.
Awards: Federal Government Academic Scholarship Award (Nigeria)
Family: 3 brothers, 1 sister
Languages: Yoruba, Hausa
Age: 30

Funsho shares from the diversity of the most populous country in Africa and the largest in West Africa with over 500 languages and 250 ethnic groups. He delivers engaging topics on Nigeria culture in the areas of religions, national pride, family as the backbone of the social system, hierarchical structure of the society, customs and business etiquette, and pictures/videos illustrating the Nigerian currency, music, dance, art, and marriages. Funsho hails from the Kwara State and can showcase some of the major foods and dressing styles among the Yoruba tribe - one of three largest and dominant ethnic groups in the country. In addition to this, Funsho presents empowering subjects on the roles and contribution of women in the society, the challenges of environmental problems in Nigeria, currency, education system, and gender issues.

GUSTAVO AGUEPUCHO MARTINEZ  
Arequipa, PERU

Major: Nutrition and Food Management, Sophomore
Education: Philomath High School (2007-08); Class President, Valedictorian, Peruvian H.S.
Experience: Boyd’s Culinary Arts Competition, Portland (2008); Senior Project, Business Management Plan
Languages: Spanish
Family: 1 sister, 1 brother, 1 son
Age: 20

Gustavo enthusiastically introduces the biodiversity of Peru which is known for its natural resources and cultural richness. He shows the ceremonies in each region (coast, mountains and jungle) including festivals, music, rituals and gastronomy. Gustavo discusses the role of companies and native people for in accessing natural resources such as oil, minerals, and water, and consequences for the environment and economic growth in each region. He comments about the politics in the last 20 years and relations with the U.S. and South America. He addresses problems such as child labor, education, malnutrition and poor health care, as well as historical events in Pre-Incan Cultures, the Incan kingdom, the Spanish invasion of South America, and industrial development. Gustavo offers Power Point, the flag, videos, toys, pictures, personalized brochures, ceramics and traditional food in his view of Peru.

YLAI (“ANNA”) MARTINEZ  
Manila, PHILIPPINES

Major: Sociology, Junior
Education: California State University Fullerton
Experience: Volunteer for Social Summit, Campus tour guide (Cal State Fullerton), medical missions (Philippines); Gawad Kalinga volunteer (Housing Aid program)
Languages: Filipino
Age: 19

Ylai (“Anna”) is passionate about Education, and describes “A Day in the life” of a typical Filipino student by region, including modern life in the city of Manila or in rural communities throughout the archipelago nation. She outlines traditions derived from Roman Catholicism and the local traditions that still prevail. Anna plays the bamboo flute, and can play songs or play music CDs, prepare simple foods such as noodles, lumpia (eggrolls) or chicken Adobo, and engage children in games that are played in schoolyards across the Philippines. A focus on courtship rituals and arranged marriages, unique indigenous cultures and practices, and traditional songs, dance and clothing will captivate audiences of all ages. Metro Manila, modern arts, the Marcos Era and the Experiences of American soldiers in Japanese-occupied WWII Philippines complete her varied and captivating presentation.
LUKAS SIMONCIC  
Bratislava, SLOVAKIA

Major: Biochemistry & Biophysics, Junior  
Education: Waldport High School 2006-07  
Awards: Most Improved Player award in football & baseball (Waldport High School), Business & Entrepreneurship class award (WHS), awards for Outstanding Achievement in chemistry and biology (WHS), Best Project in "Biology Olympics" in the district of capital city Bratislava, Slovakia  
Languages: Slovak, Czech, French  
Family: 1 brother  
Age: 21  

Lukas presents the geopolitical situation in Slovakia and central Europe, relationships between countries of the European union and countries outside the EU, cultural differences between these countries, and highlights minorities and their lives in Slovakia. He discusses the importance of freedom and democracy in daily life of a citizen of a country, the history of Slovakia, negative influences of a communist regime in post-communist countries, and business and entrepreneurship in Slovakia compared to United States. Lukas moderated a folk festival with his Grandfather, and has photos showing the colorful attire of attendees. Cooking traditional foods, national clothing, posters and traditional artifacts from the region complement his sincere look at the small but proud nation, Slovakia.

YUN JI CHOI  
Jeonju, S. KOREA

Major: Civil Engineering, Junior  
Education: International School of the Cascades, Central OR Community College 2006-07  
Awards: Athlete Honor Roll (3.5 GPA or above); Central Oregon Math Competition, "Placed" in Calculus Division; National Honor Society (U.S.)  
Experience: World Quest Competition; Varsity Swimming (OR), Vice President of Korean Student Association (09’-10), Secretary, Engineers without borders (2010-present), ISOSU Program Coordinator (2010-present)  
Languages: Korean (Hangul)  
Family: 1 brother  
Age: 20  

In her presentations, Yun Ji discusses world relations, especially issues in North Korea, the Unity of South and North Korea, the War, Nuclear Weapons, the food crisis of N. Korea, as well as the Social Structure of N. Korea. She speaks frankly about her family’s experiences during the Korean war and developments after the war. Yun Ji displays traditional costumes of Korea and traditional music, and can play the Danso (bamboo flute), Jang-goo (a traditional instrument), and do calligraphy. She cooks traditional Korean dishes, plays piano, writes poetry, and has experience in theater arts. Yun Ji is both accomplished and gracious, and offers a breadth of cultural perspectives in her presentations.
SUNG HEE HONG                  Iksan, S. KOREA

**Major:** Pharmacy (PharmD)  
**Education:** Portland State University (B.S.), Kyung-Hee University (South Korea); B.A  
**Experience:** Korean School in Beaverton, Instructor; City Tree Christian School, San Diego, Teacher’s Assistant; Doernbeher Children’s Hospital, Volunteer  
**Awards:** Tau Sigma National Honor Society  
**Languages:** Korean  
**Age:** 31  

Sung Hee is ready to share about traditional Korean culture and also contemporary issues through a glimpse at today’s lifestyles. Half the size of Oregon, South Korea is one of the richest countries in Asia, with companies like Hyundai, LG, Samsung and KIA employing millions across the globe. Sung Hee discusses the influence of other nationalities on Korean culture, politics and economy, and describes education and health systems in contrast to those in the U.S. She shares some favorite “Fusion foods” popular in Korea today, including things like Korean tacos, and can cook food, play games such as “Jai Gi” (a ‘hackeysack’ type game), and can even guide an audience in making their own sack. Sung Hee is ready for any audience with a cheerful smile and a lively look at South Korea.

TAWALIN OPASTRAKOON                  Chiang Mai, THAILAND

**Major:** Electrical and Computer Engineering, Senior  
**Education:** Paisley High School, Oregon (High School Exchange)  
**Experience:** Teacher’s Aide, elementary art program; volleyball, basketball; Future Farmers of America (Paisley Chapter); OSU Tech-bots lab employee  
**Awards:** National Honor Society; FFA first-place finish (floriculture competition)  
**Languages:** Thai  
**Family:** 1 brother, 1 sister  
**Age:** 23  

Tawalin graciously presents to American audiences a look at the “Land of Smiles,” the Kingdom of Thailand. She describes this primarily Buddhist country by situating it geographically, and illustrating traditional lifestyles such as Thai stilt houses, traditional modes of dress, Buddhism and monks, family in the past and present, and the art of foods, including the craft of fresh vegetable carving. Tawalin highlights the King and Royal Family (now the oldest reigning monarch in the world), Loi Kratong festival, typical school days for Thai youth, and the importance of the elephant to Thai people. Cooking, folk stories, traditional instruments, a model Thai house, craft activities made from paper, stamps, coins, children’s books, pictures, and a lovely demonstration of basic vegetable carving all comprise her delightful view of Thai life.
PREEDANOOD PREMPREEDA

**Major:** Industrial Engineering, M.S.
**Education:** B.S., Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok): Automotive Design and Manufacturing Engineering
**Experience:** Camp Counselor (2 years); Forest Mangrove Preservation Program volunteer; Math tutor, grades 2-12; Rural Education Development Volunteer
**Languages:** Thai
**Age:** 23

Preedanood ("Mim") introduces the rich traditions and customs of the only country in Asia to never be colonized: Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the longest reigning monarch in the world and the longest in the history of Thailand, and Mim describes why Thais love and worship their King, so much that many are willing to sacrifice their own lives for him. She demonstrates greetings, Thai manners and family life, and “peculiar ways,” such as nicknames (her nickname “Mim” is more commonly used than her given name), how Thais treat others, and table manners. She enjoys cooking and can give demos of traditional foods, and can also demonstrate dances, Thai musical instruments and games for children. A highlight on festivals such as Songkran (New Year’s Day) as well as Family Day and Elder day will delight young audiences, as they learn about pouring water on others as a show of respect! Mim’s charming presentation will give audiences new and familiar a delightful look at lovely Thailand.

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YVONNE NASWALI

**Major:** Business Administration Makerere College School, Oregon State University.
**Experience** Student Councilor, Community Volunteer
**Awards** Africa Leadership Foundation April- June 2008
**Languages** English, Luganda, Lugishu
**Family** 2 brothers, 4 sisters
**Age:** 22

Yvonne eagerly shares about her multi-tribal country in various ways, most notably by vividly demonstrating five different tribal dances, common in five distinct regions throughout the country. She can not only teach an audience simple dance moves, but explains the symbolism and social significance of each, and can teach songs appropriate for any age. Yvonne also offers presentations based on the diverse tribes and cultures of Uganda, describes political issues and economical and social issues facing the country, and offers a glimpse into the daily lives of city and village dwellers. Yvonne can describe and prepare simple foods, and brings hands-on items such as clothes, handcrafts, the Ugandan flag, pictures and coins to round out her colorful and fascinating overview of scenic Uganda.

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LY NGUYEN

**Major:** M.S., Pharmaceutical Science
**Education** Hanoi University of Pharmacy
**Experience:** Hanoi University of Pharmacy, Instructor; Central Pharmaceutical Company 1 (Quality Control); Badminton Tournament Championship; Youth Union Leader; Flood Relief Fund Organizer
**Languages** Vietnamese
**Family** Married, 1 son (5 years old)
**Age:** 34

Ly offers Vietnamese culture to audiences with a sampling of “summer rolls,” which can be eaten all year, and are flavorful and refreshing. He explains the setting in which these are made, with guests and children challenging one another’s techniques, and the customs and etiquette common in other social settings. Ly describes typical family life, relationships, festivals such as Tet or Do Son (Buffalo-fighting festival), and issues of poverty and urban development (such as traffic safety) in today’s Vietnam. A look at myths and legends, or activities like jump-rope games, badminton, or “shuttlecock,” will delight children of all ages. A traditional monochord instrument and Ao dai (dress) will also interest audiences when Ly presents his sincere and captivating look at intriguing Vietnam.