A child’s garden of music
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Director’s Chair
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Fall symposium, exhibit showcases reverse glass painting traditions
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Another exciting year is behind us at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and no moss has gathered on AY 2017–18. The first major event was the well-deserved promotion of then-CSEAS Director Judy Ledgerwood to Acting Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and mine to Acting Director. After her Fulbright year in Indonesia, Center associate and music professor Jui-Ching Wang graciously agreed to serve as the new Acting Assistant Director of CSEAS.

Ledgerwood to Acting Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and mine to Acting Director. After her Fulbright year in Indonesia, Center associate and music professor Jui-Ching Wang graciously agreed to serve as the new Acting Assistant Director of CSEAS.

We started the year on the run with a full calendar of Southeast Asia projects, programs and initiatives. We signed a province-wide Memorandum of Understanding with the government and governor of North Kalimantan, Indonesia, the first of its kind. This arrangement allows for a wider engagement with our partners in Southeast Asia than the more common university-to-university agreement and we are looking forward to tapping into more of this potential. Other highlights of the past year included a visit from a delegation from West Sumatra, an Association of Southeast Asian Nations-focused conference, 8,400 listens to our Southeast Asia Crossroads podcast, and more than 40 million hits on our SEAsite language learning website.

Those around northern Illinois know the significance of the Pumpkin Festival Parade, which draws 75,000 visitors to the nearby town of Sycamore at the end of October every year. We decided for the first time to enter the parade to raise our profile locally and strengthen town-gown relationships. Those in Southeast Asia know the region’s serious commitment to parade culture and public spectacle and our parade entry did not disappoint! Most importantly, faculty, students and community members came together to put on an impressive display of Southeast Asian arts and culture. Complete with a gamelan ensemble, a rolling Indonesian-style pavilion, Thai dancers, and CSEAS students, faculty and families marching with SEA flags and signs in all the national languages, I think it is safe to say that the spectators, which included consular officials from the Philippines and Indonesia, had never seen anything quite like it.

Since 2009, youth leadership grants from the U.S. Department of State have become a valuable part of CSEAS operations and we put on some great programs this year. The department’s Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) program brought another ambitious group of 21 young adults from Southeast Asia to NIU in the fall, all of whom are now successfully working to execute civic engagement projects in their home countries. Regrettfully, YSEALI will not be returning to campus in the upcoming cycle. We extend our very best wishes to Administrative Director Colleen Gray, an alumna of our program (MA anthropology, 2014) who stayed on at NIU and CSEAS to work with both YSEALI and Center outreach. We will greatly miss her energy and enthusiasm as she moves on to other endeavors.

In spring, we again hosted 60 Southeast Asian high schoolers and adult leaders through the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP). In early 2018, former SEAYLP Administrative Director Maria “Rai” Nihei accepted
a new position with the Sponsored Programs Administration (where she continues to work closely with our grants). We were pleased to welcome Anastasia Kocher as the new SEAYLP coordinator. Kocher, who received a master’s in public administration from NIU in 2015, comes to us with previous experience helping run the State Department’s Philippine Youth Exchange Program (PYLP) and other exchange programs through NIU’s Division of International Affairs. We recently received the good news that CSEAS has been awarded a State Department grant to host the 15th session of PYLP at NIU. We will carry on the great legacy of emeritus CSEAS associates Susan Russell (Anthropology) and Lina Ong (International Training Office), who began the first PYLP in 2004 and who have now both retired.

This year was also the last of our four-year Title VI National Resource Center and Foreign Language Area Studies grant from the U.S. Department of Education. We worked very hard to deliver on our promises to present Southeast Asia through outreach, to teach Southeast Asia through language and area studies and to engage with many partners in the region.

To those ends we supported 16 Foreign Language and Area Studies academic-year fellows, hosted cultural events on and off campus, mentored a community college study abroad program to Cambodia, conducted the sixth year of the PKPI emerging Indonesian scholars program, and made significant updates to our website and SEAsite.

Much effort over the past months went into the preparation, writing and submission of our Title VI grant application for the 2018–2022 grant cycle. So many CSEAS associates, staff and friends poured countless hours into building the next iteration of CSEAS activities and projects. We anticipate hearing results from the Department of Education in late summer or early fall.

During this past year, I have felt the support and encouragement of my CSEAS/NIU colleagues in my new role as director and I want to thank the community for its vote of confidence. CSEAS and its programs were THE reason I chose to come to NIU as a newly minted PhD. I care deeply for the center of excellence we have created and hope that we will work together to continue this impressive momentum as a global resource for the study of Southeast Asia.

NIU gamelan instructor Ngurah Kertayuda delights spectators with music and mask during the Pumpkinfest parade.
Kenton Clymer (History)
- Is serving as editor for Northern Illinois University Press’s Southeast Asian Series

Aarie Glas (Political Science)
- Published “Habits of Peace: Long-term Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia” in the December 2017 issue of the European Journal of International Relations and co-authored “Understanding Treaty Making as a Constitutive Practice of Global Politics” with Clifton van der Linden, Matthew Hoffman and Robert Denemark, for a forthcoming issue of the Journal of Global Security Studies
- Is currently working on the manuscript for his book, Habits of Peace: The Foundations of Long-Term Cooperation in Southeast Asia and South America
- Presented research on ASEAN regionalism in April at the International Studies Association convention
- Organized ASEAN@50: Challenges and Opportunities conference Sept. 18 at NIU

Kikue Hamayotsu (Political Science)
- Spent the summer in Asia conducting fieldwork and data collection for a book manuscript underway
- Had her article, “The Political Origins of Islamic Courts in Divided Societies: The Case of Malaysia,” accepted for publication in Journal of Law and Religion
- Was a discussant on the panel “20 Years after Suharto: Trajectories of State and Social Forces in Indonesian Politics” at the March 2018 Association of Asian Studies meeting
- Discussed how religion has been “aggressively politicized” in Indonesia March 5 in online World Politics Review
- Published “Moderate-Radical Coalition in the Name of Islam: Conservative Islamism in Indonesia and Malaysia” in Kyoto Review of Southeast Asia

Trude Jacobsen (History)
- Is working on biography of Sherlock Hare, exploring the life of the British expatriate in colonial Burma
- Presented a lecture on sex trafficking and modern-day slavery in Southeast Asia Jan. 16 at the NIU Lifelong Learning Institute
- Presented “In Defense of the Numbers: Mapping Experience in Southeast Asian Pasts” Oct. 20 at the Arts Education Research Institute Symposium in Naperville

Eric Jones (History)
- Has been invited to serve on the 2019–20 Fulbright U.S. Student Program’s National Screening Committee for Southeast Asia
- Traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to promote Title VI programs on Capitol Hill and to attend meetings with the Center’s program officers at the U.S. departments of Education and State. He also met with Southeast Asian Studies Summer Institute stakeholders, other National Resource Center directors, and the Southeast Asia Language Council, a new group formed to support SEA language study in the U.S.
- Received the Outstanding International Educator award from the NIU Division of International Affairs Nov. 24 during International Education Week
- Presented “World History Declassified: The CIA, Southeast Asia and Public History” Oct. 20 at the Great Lakes History Conference at Grand Valley State University and “Slavery, Servitude and Social Change in Southeast Asia” Oct. 23 at St. Xavier University

May the grant be with you:

Above, associates Jim Wilson, Jui-Ching Wang, Catherine Raymond, Melissa Lenczewski and Alan Potkin put their heads together at the off-site Title VI grant-writing retreat in May at Apple Canyon Lake. At left, Kanjana Thepbiriruk and Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail work on the proposal’s language section.
Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology)
• Contributed the introduction to Stay: A Khmer Village in Cambodia (Cornell University Press, 2018)
• Traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to promote Title VI programs on Capitol Hill
• Attended the May 22–25 Modes of Peace and Policy Issues in Burma/Myanmar, 6–10 conference, Pressing Academic Challenges in Higher Ed: Personal Experiences at NIU and Mandalay” at Brown University
• Presented “Finding a Safe Zone and Human Rights in Myanmar” Aug. 3–5 at Bangkok, Burma Studies Conference, University Institute for Conflict Studies
• Was invited to Nagoya, Japan, for July 6–10 conference, Pressing Academic and Policy Issues in Burma/Myanmar, at Aichi Gakuin University
• Was invited to be discussant on “The Rohingya Question” panel at the March 2018 Association of Asian Studies meeting
• Presented “Finding a Safe Zone and Challenges in Higher Ed: Personal Experiences at NIU and Mandalay” at Brown University
• Presented “Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma)” Oct. 26 at Illinois Valley Community College

Melissa Lenczewski (Geology and Environmental Geosciences)
• Moderated the panel “Environmental and Sustainability Issues in Myanmar” Aug. 4 at the International Burma Studies Conference in Bangkok. On the panel were CSEAS associates Tomoyuki Shibata (Public Health) and James Wilson (Geographic and Atmospheric Sciences).

Andrea Molnar (Anthropology)
• Spent fall semester on sabbatical in Anthropology
• Traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to promote Title VI programs on Capitol Hill

Catherine Raymond (School of Art, Center for Burma Studies)
• Conducted fieldwork on the tradition of reverse glass painting in Indonesia, Cambodia and Thailand in June and July. Raymond was awarded a Rakow Grant for Glass Research from the Corning Museum of Glass in April to complete a manuscript on the art in mainland SEA. Her research will be the subject of an exhibit and symposium this fall at NIU (see On Display, page 12)
• Hosted the International Conference on Burma Studies Aug. 3–5 in Bangkok
• Was invited to Nagoya, Japan, for July 6–10 conference, Pressing Academic and Policy Issues in Burma/Myanmar, at Aichi Gakuin University
• Traveled to Singapore June 17–24 as senior advisor for the workshop, “Place and City,” a Getty Grant project for Sydney University
• Attended the May 22–25 Modes of Authority: Narratives and Aesthetic in Southeast Asia conference at La Sorbonne
• Presented “Looking Beyond the Glass and Delineating Sacred Places: Trans-Asian between China and Buddhist Mainland Southeast Asia” March 10 at Silpakorn University.
• Served as discussant at the International Conference on Burma/Myanmar Studies Feb. 16–18 at University of Mandalay
• Conducted fieldwork in January in the Shan States in Myanmar
• Presented “Sacred Spaces, the Art of Merit Making and the Trans Asian Trade: Looking Beyond the Glass of Buddhist Mainland Southeast Asia” Nov. 3 at University of Wisconsin-Madison

Hao Phan (NIU Libraries)
• Published “Two Readings of Two Books by Viet Thanh Nguyen” in the Journal of Vietnamese Studies

Alan Potkin (CSEAS Adjunct)
• Presented “Interactive Visualization of Salween Basin Development and its Aggregate Impact on the Thanlwin Estuary” Aug. 4 at the International Burma Studies Conference in Bangkok

Tomoyuki Shibata (Public Health)
• Conducted research in Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand over the summer

Tharaphi Than (World Languages and Cultures)
• Worked with the History Department at Yangon University on new approaches to teaching history
• Traveled to Taiwan in May and mid-June to teach intensive language and culture course on Myanmar at National Chengchi University (see sidebar), and to give lecture on Burmese women at Academia Sinica
• Was invited to be discussant on “The Rohingya Question” panel at the March 2018 Association of Asian Studies meeting
• Presented “Finding a Safe Zone and Challenges in Higher Ed: Personal Experiences at NIU and Mandalay” at Brown University
• Presented “Human Rights in Myanmar (Burma)” Oct. 26 at Illinois Valley Community College

Kanjana Thepboriruk (World Languages and Cultures)
• Received Thailand Ministry of Foreign Affairs grant in April from the Thai Royal Consulate General of Chicago for her work with the Chicago-area Thai community
• Attended meetings of the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages, the Southeast Asian Language Taskforce and the Thailand-Laos-Cambodia section at the March 2018 Association of Asian Studies meeting
• Presented “Mothering the Nation: Gendered Nationalism and Patriarchic Patriotism” March 10 at the Thailand Symposium at York University in Toronto, a reprise of her presentation at Nov. 10–11 Council on Thai Studies meeting at University of California Los Angeles

continued on page 6
Kurt Thurmaier (Public Administration)
- Received word that his department’s Master’s of Public Administration program placed in the top five such programs in the U.S.

Kheang Un (Political Science)
- Taught graduate seminar on politics in developing areas in July at Xiamen University in Fujian, China.
- Authored Mirage on the Mekong: Democratization in Cambodia, forthcoming from Cambridge University Press
- Published “Framing Duch: Varying Ideas of Justice” in the Journal of Genocide Research
- Presented “Cambodia’s Political Risk Analysis” at a conference in January organized by University of PuThisastra and University of Korea and Korea Institute for Economic and Trade

Jui-Ching Wang (School of Music)
- Presented “Beyond Cultural Tourism: An Ethnopedagogy to Study Performing Arts in Bali” Jan. 3 in Taiwan at National Chi-Nan University and “Sing our Songs, Sing Our Pride: Javanese Children’s Singing Games and Their Sociocultural Functions in 20th-century Indonesia” Jan. 4 at National Cheng-Chi University
- Was named Assistant CSEAS Director in fall 2017

Oral history: Discovering Myanmar through food

If cooking makes us human, it is only natural that one way to learn about a culture is through its food. In June, CSEAS associate Tharaphi Than (World Languages and Cultures) led a group of undergraduate students at National Chengchi University in Taiwan through a cultural food project during an intensive six-day course on the languages, cultures and history of Myanmar. The first cohort of a new Southeast Asian Languages and Cultures Program at the school, the students for their project spent two days on Huaxin Street, also known as Myanmar Street, in Taipei. Using methodology developed by Humanities across Borders, an education and research initiative by the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), the students visited with food vendors along the street, exploring connections between Taiwan and Myanmar as well as mainland China and Hong Kong. The students then documented their research by creating a multimedia story, “Myanmar through Food,” on Pagelflow, a digital storytelling tool and publishing platform.

The topics, photographs and videos that emerged from the students’ interviews ranged from linguistic and cultural exchanges symbolized in food to feelings and identities expressed in food. At the Myanmar Tea Shop, for example, they filmed shopkeeper Hoa Qiao making milk tea using tea leaves from Myanmar and evaporated milk from Singapore, a beverage that connects her, she said, to her parents’ cultural heritage. They learned that while drinking tea in teashops is not something women in Myanmar do, it is the opposite in Taiwanese society where more women than men gather in teashops to drink tea and socialize with friends.

“This methodology—using everyday objects and food as an entry point—allows us to bring forth humanistic elements of the subject right from the start,” Than said. “Students learned about the immigrant community from Burma through taste, smell, sights and more importantly intimate details about immigrant lives in the kitchen and the shop floor. So instead of asking questions such as ‘how do immigration policies affect you,’ students asked ‘how do you make Mohinga (rice noodle and fish soup)’?”

Than repeated the project in Myanmar with Yangon University history students, who went out on the streets of Yangon to interview street vendors, train hawkers and shopkeepers about Thanakha (white cosmetic paste), betel quid, pickled tealeaf, tea and cheroots. “This is the first ever project by the Yangon University History Department to train students on methodologies and skills to study a much-needed history from below in a country like Burma,” Than said. “We hope to gradually change pedagogies, curricula and knowledge production time to be more inclusive and less hierarchical.”

Than has been affiliated with Humanities across Borders: Asia and Africa in the World (2017–2020) since its inception. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and IIAS, with support of Leiden University in the Netherlands, are the principal funders.
Graduation, kudos and festive graduation stoles

Fifteen CSEAS-affiliated graduate and undergraduate students graduated from NIU during the 2017–18 academic year and summer 2018. Three graduate students completed advanced degrees with a concentration in Southeast Asian Studies in May: Samuel Bunting (JD law), Carmin Berchiolly (MA art history) and Kallen Terry (MA history). Seven undergraduates received bachelor’s degrees with minors in Southeast Asian Studies: Sherry Butler (psychology), Melissa Cardella (communications/media studies), Christine Dose (anthropology), Joseph Harris (economics), Rachel Jacob (political science/history with honors), Margaret Miller (chemistry-biochemistry/psychology with honors), and Andrew Waite (human resource management with honors). FLAS fellows Claire Buchanan and Caitlin Blackburn Bemis (anthropology) received their master’s degrees in August. Former CSEAS teaching assistant Iqra Anugrah (political science) successfully defended his dissertation, “Elite-Peasant Relations in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia: Decentralization, Dispossession, and Countermovement,” in June. Anugrah, who participated in the Southeast Asia Research Group’s Public Intellectuals Workshop in February at Duke University, has accepted a residency fellowship at the Asia Culture Research Institute at the Asia Culture Center in Gwangju, South Korea.

Two Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) Scholars also completed their programs of study in 2017–18. Mar Louie Mayubay (2012 SEAYLP-Philippines) received his master’s in accountancy in December and Ye Pyae Thu (2014 SEAYLP-Myanmar) received his bachelor’s degree in business administration with honors in May. Thu will begin a two-year master’s of international business program in the fall at Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China. In addition, he teamed up with 2017–18 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Arkar Kyaw to win a $25,000 U.S. Department of State Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund grant to train more than 200 university teachers from five remote border states in Myanmar about educational leadership and the promotion of tolerance and cultural understanding in diverse classroom settings.

Other noteworthy student accomplishments in 2017–18:

Two CSEAS students were named Outstanding Graduate Students in their departments by the Graduate School in April: Caitlin Bemis Blackburn (Anthropology) and FLAS fellow Markie Striegel (Art and Design). Two other CSEAS students also received Graduate School awards. Iqra Anugrah received a dissertation completion fellowship and JoAnn LoSavio (PhD history), who is currently working on her dissertation, received the Carter G. Woodson Fellowship. LoSavio, who also won the History Department’s Jameson Prize for Best Research in a Graduate Seminar for her paper, “The Campfire Girl and the

Certificates of approval
Law student Samuel Bunting and undergraduate Andrew Waite show off their graduate and undergraduate Southeast Asian Studies certificates respectively at the end-of-year Sarong Soiree. Waite is also wearing a batik graduation stole, designed by Office Manager Lisa Heal for all of the Center’s graduating minors and certificate holders.

Top marks
Anthropology graduate student Kassandra Chhay, center, receives the award for Best Graduate Paper at the Southeast Asia Club’s Spring 2018 Southeast Asia Student Conference from CSEAS Director Eric Jones and conference coordinator Rachael Skog. The title of Chhay’s paper was “Educational Experiences of 1.5 Generation Cambodian-American Refugees.”

Carmin Berchiolly (MA art history, 2018), whose graduate thesis was “Colonial Burma as Commodified Fetish: Reactivating Photographic Images through the British Empire’s Orientalizing Gaze,” received the award for NIU Museum Studies Student of the Year for 2018 in April.

Nicole Loring (PhD political science) won the Political Science Department’s Martin David Memorial Scholarship and has also been awarded the Center’s 2018–19 Neher fellowship (see page 17). Her article, “Overcoming Barriers: Myanmar’s Recent Elections and Women’s Political Participation,” appeared January 18 in Asia Pacific Viewpoint. She is currently writing her dissertation.

Markie Striegel (MA art history) traveled to Oxford University St. Antony’s College in June to participate in the SOAS-Oxford Graduate Student Workshop, New Directions in Research on Myanmar. She presented her thesis research, “Luntaya Acheik: Unraveling a Definitive Myanmar Textile. In August she assisted at the International Burma Studies Conference (with Carmin Berchiolly and Colleen Gray) in Bangkok before heading to Myanmar for two weeks where she worked with the Inya Institute in Yangon on the digital cataloguing of objects at a Shan monastery and conducted research for her thesis in Mandalay.

Indonesian graduate student Afrimadona was awarded his PhD in political science in May. The title of his dissertation was “Three Essays on Congressional Influence in American Foreign Policy.”

Undergraduate SEAYLP Scholar I Younan (political science) received the Kevin D. Night Leadership Award, NIU’s top leadership award, in ceremonies April 29. President of the Southeast Asia Club, he has been a Community Advisor for Housing and Residential Services for three years and active in the Student Association and Model United Nations. Younan worked as an urban development intern for the City of Minneapolis over the summer.

Agoes awarded first Dwight King scholarship

SEAS graduate assistant Azriansyah Agoes, a doctoral student in political science, has been awarded the 2018–19 Dwight Y. King Graduate Scholarship for the Study of Indonesia. The $1,000 scholarship is the first to be given from the endowment established before his death by late Political Science Professor and CSEAS Director Emeritus Dwight King. King, who mentored many Indonesian graduate students over his years as a professor, wished to support the research efforts of international students with this scholarship. Agoes, who hails from Malang, Java, received his bachelor’s degree in political science from Universitas Indonesia, and joined the MA/PhD program in political science at NIU in 2012. Receiving his MA in 2015, he is pursuing his PhD in comparative politics with his research emphasis on Indonesia and Cambodia. The deadline to apply for the 2019–20 King scholarship is March 1.
Alumni News

Making the grade in life and academia

Aboud Agha (MM music, 2013), now a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at UCLA, was back on campus in March as a guest lecturer for MUHL 431/531 and SEAS 225. Agha’s topic was Islam’s role in modern music practices in Indonesia, drawn from his research on an extracurricular music group at Islam State University Yogyakarta. While at NIU, Agha studied world music performance and founded the Middle Eastern Ensemble.

Former FLAS fellow Michael Grzybowski (MS geology, 2017), now a geologist with the Antea Group Nederland in Cherry Hill, NJ, presented “Improving Groundwater Management in Myanmar through Capacity Building” Dec. 4 at the National Groundwater Association Summit in Nashville, TN. Grzybowski won the conference’s award for best student presentation for his research, which he conducted with CSEAS associate Melissa Lenczewski (Geology and Environmental Geosciences), Yee Yee Oo, physics professor at Mandalay University, and Luis Marin, a senior researcher at Instituto de Geofisica in Mexico. The project was to develop a hydrogeological model and deliver it through open-source platforms to aid Myanmar scientists working on groundwater management.

Lenczewski and Grzybowski traveled to Myanmar in 2016 to conduct a two-week workshop on using open-source platforms.

Nay Yan Oo (MA political science, 2015) has been accepted into the two-year Public Policy Program at the University of Oxford.

Laurence Anthonie Tumpag (MA anthropology, 2016), a board member of the Filipino American Historical Society of Chicago, participated in the panel “The Increasingly Significant Role of Heritage Professionals in Social Justice Today” July 20 at the Association of Midwest Museums conference. Tumpag curated an exhibit, Filipinos of Greater Chicago, which went on display in mid-July at Seafood City Supermarket in Chicago, with the society’s founding president, Estrella Alamar. Tumpag received a certificate of excellence from Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas in June for his “commitment and dedication to the Filipino American community” for his work with the organization.

Scott Abel (PhD history, 2016) has been in Singapore as a 2018 Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow at the National Library of Singapore.

Matthew Ropp (BA communication, 2013) lives in Shanghai, China, where he is teaching reading and creative writing for an after-school program for the Storyland company. Ropp was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Malaysia for two years after graduating from NIU.

Bryan Hunsaker (PhD political science, 1997) is putting his Thailand expertise to a culinary use in a new Chicago-area Thai restaurant, Oy’s Thai Cuisine. The restaurant opened in January.

Meet and greet

Anthropology alums Alexx Salazar (MA 2016) and Shannon Thomas (MA 2017), in transit from Palawan Island in the Philippines where she works for the Palawan NGO Network, meet in June at the University of London where Salazar is pursuing her PhD in anthropology at SOAS.

Telling it like it is

Shaun Levin (MA political science, 2006), head of government relations Southeast Asia for MetLife in Kuala Lumpur, was back on campus in March for an Alumni Connect talk to CSEAS students about careers in the region. He offered these tips: “Take risks early and learn to fail. Failing should be seen as a learning opportunity; just make sure you are taking educated risks….Constantly learn and accept your shortcomings in any endeavor as an opportunity to grow and exceed your own expectations. Stand out. For anyone pursuing a career in Southeast Asia or anywhere for that matter, on-the-ground experience is a key differentiator. Take the language program, get into the region and network. All three are critical in today’s job market.”
A series of coincidences led Assistant CSEAS Director and Associate Music Professor Jui-Ching Wang to Indonesia to witness firsthand the value of traditional children’s singing games.

At the beginning of her tenure in NIU’s School of Music, Wang found herself directing the school’s gamelan ensemble. She immersed herself in learning everything she could about gamelan, a traditional Indonesian percussion ensemble. She ended up in the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection at Founders Memorial Library. Among the Southeast Asian artifacts and materials there, she found a music book she could use in class. “I was able to learn some songs from the book so that I could teach them,” she said. “It really helped me become more comfortable, and then one day I found some song books that had children’s singing games in them.”

Around the same time, Wang enrolled in CSEAS associate emerita Patricia Henry’s Indonesian language course so she could learn to read and speak Bahasa. Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Dyah Pandam Mitayani, or Mita, was assisting in the class. Mita was interested in Wang’s musical background as she herself came from a musical family. As coincidence would have it, Mita’s grandfather, S. Hadisukatmo, had written a book on integrating traditional singing games into school curriculum, and that book was in the NIU library.
“Mita told me the whole story of how her grandfather composed children's songs based on the traditional music style in Indonesia,” Wang said. “On the island of Java there’s an elementary school that was established in 1922 and it was the first school for Javanese children to attend.”

The school is named Taman Siswa, which translates to “Children's Garden.”

“Java was colonized by the Dutch,” Wang said. “Prior to this school opening, only members of the royal family or noble class could go to school with the Dutch. So ordinary Javanese children didn’t go to school.”

“The founder of that school had met Montessori when he was an exile in the Netherlands in the 1910s, and he was influenced by Montessori. So when he came back to Java he worked to incorporate their unique cultural heritage into the school. He felt that the European education system was good, but he wanted Indonesians to value their own cultural heritage. So he insisted that among the traditional values that were being taught, that singing games be incorporated into the curriculum.”

“Before that, children would just sing and play outside, and help their parents with farming or house chores. But all along they would play together and a group and that’s how the singing games started.”

Singing games went from the primary way Indonesian children learned to being intertwined with a European system of learning, giving these young students the best of both worlds, and taking best advantage of what Wang says is an innate gift for multi-tasking.

“There’s a strong musical characteristic there,” she said. “It’s fascinating how young children can do multiple layers of singing, and play instruments. One group of children can play instruments and the other group can sing against what they play. They do it without having formal music training. What attracted me to learning more and more about it was how complex the music is. The more I learned the Indonesian language, the more I learned about the history of

Indonesia and began to realize that the language and music is really a whole package that comes together.”

In 2014, Wang traveled to visit Mita’s family in Yogakarta for ten days. “Her parents were very enthusiastic about my visit, and took me to Taman Siswa, where I was greeted by a group of young children,” Wang said. “They sang and danced and that’s what really got me interested in studying how, in the twenty-first century, there are still some schools who are interested in and value this kind of learning.”

Even in Indonesia this kind of curriculum is rare, Wang said. “It’s more like here where we don’t allocate time for children to learn that kind of tradition. It takes a lot to do that.”

Upon her return to campus, Wang published an article about the use of singing games in Indonesian schools. In 2016, she earned a Fulbright to return to Java to continue her research. She spent ten months visiting that same elementary school nearly every day.

“In my proposal I specified that Taman Siswa was where I wanted to go for my

Fulbright for two reasons,” she said. “The first is that they are still teaching using singing games, unlike many of the other schools in Indonesia. The other schools feel like, ‘It’s too much of a waste of time. We don’t care about our traditional culture, we just want to catch up with the modern world.’ The second reason is that the school has a museum right on the campus. The museum houses all of the writings of the founder of the school, Ki Hadjar Dewantara. Not only did he found the school, but after the country got its independence he became their first minister of education. He’s a very important person in their history, but he didn’t enjoy politics. As soon as he got their education system set up he stepped down. He wrote a lot of books and published a magazine about their education methods. So I could do all of my research there, while also studying what the school is doing to counteract the modern trend of education.”

“Why is it important to have children play inside of a school setting?” Wang asked. “Because they don’t want children to be just sitting in a classroom, receiving information. They want children to grow in a natural setting. That’s why they named the school ‘Children’s Garden,’ because every child is going to grow differently, just like you have in your garden. Different flowers, different trees, different everything. It’s child-centered learning.”

Wang said that in spite of the importance that the Taman Siswa movement had in the development of Indonesian education, it is dying out.

“When the school system started there were hundreds of schools in different branches,” she said. “Now, there are only about 120 schools left. There’s a centralized educational system in Indonesia, and the reason Taman Siswa has their own curriculum is because the founder refused to receive funding from the government, so it’s being operated using its own sources of funding.”

When the school was founded, Taman Siswa’s curriculum was unique. Nearly a hundred years later, the circle is nearly

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On Display
Through the reverse glass lightly

Vanishing Art from Myanmar:
The Buddhist Reverse Glass Painting Tradition
Nov. 15, 2018–Feb. 15, 2019
NIU Art Museum

In reverse glass painting, the artist meticulously brushes an image onto a piece of clear glass so that the finished art may be viewed through the glass from the other side. For the past three years, CSEAS associate and Center for Burma Studies Director Catherine Raymond has been researching reverse glass painting in mainland Southeast Asia, an art form that is disappearing across the region. Focusing on Myanmar, Raymond’s research has taken her and graduate students Carmin Berchiolly and Markie Striegel to a remote village, to marketplaces and eventually to the University of Mandalay Research Center where she conducted a symposium and exhibition on reverse glass painting in June 2017.

The technique of reverse painting on glass began in Europe in the Middle Ages and came to Southeast Asia via China and South Asia. While reverse glass painting in Indonesia was well-documented, Raymond took the road less traveled, inspired by a visit to a 19th-century Buddhist temple Wat Chong Klang on the Thai-Burma border where there are 200 reverse-painting glass panes installed on the walls. The Thailand connection began with a gift of 100 reverse glass paintings given to the king of Thailand in 1686 by the Dutch East India Company. The King of Burma, who had invaded Thailand, took an interest in the art form in 1795.

With her research revealing the art of painting images on glass dying out in Myanmar, in 2015 Raymond went to the last village where artists still practice the art. “With my students and colleagues we interviewed elderly artists on their techniques because there is an urgent need to preserve and create a record of this vanishing art form,” she said in an April 2018 article in the NIU Arts Blog.

Raymond will bring the fruits of her research to NIU with her upcoming exhibit, “Vanishing Art from Myanmar: The Buddhist Reverse Glass Painting Tradition,” opening Nov. 15 at the NIU Art Museum. An accompanying symposium will take place Nov. 16.

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complete and it is once again unique, and that, Wang said, is an opportunity.

“They feel like they have a chance to revive what was glorious in the past,” she said. “They see this as the pearl now. They have something that other schools don’t have, and that was the reason they valued my time there.”

With Wang’s assistance, the school submitted a proposal to the 2018 International Society for Music Education World Conference in Baku, Azerbaijan. Their proposal for a group of children from Taman Siswa to perform at the July 15–20 conference was accepted, but the group was unable to attend. Wang, however, did get to Baku where she presented a paper about singing games, “More than Having Fun: Tembang Dolanan Anak and its Sociocultural Functions in Indonesia (1920s–1980s).”

Wang is now putting what she has learned from her research to use at NIU, incorporating her findings and methods into the elementary education and general music method courses that she teaches. She has also developed graduate level and seminar courses, and is always looking for ways to lead groups of graduate students and collaborate with them or faculty to develop research projects together.

One such project is a collaboration with Yogyakarta State University in Yogyakarta to conduct a survey examining how non-Taman Siswa public schools in central Java incorporate the use of some singing games into their curricula.

“I hope to be able to go visit and get more data from other school systems, so that I can look at it from a broader perspective,” Wang said.

Andy Dolan is director of marketing and communications for NIU’s College of Visual and Performing Arts. This article first appeared in the NIU Arts Blog.
Outreach Update

Expanding our orbit

From cultural events to signing new memoranda of understanding with Southeast Asia institutions and entities (see Director’s Note, page 2) to helping two area community college educators build a successful summer 2018 study abroad program to Cambodia, CSEAS continued to focus on expanding its cultural and educational outreach during 2017–18.

CSEAS welcomed three Southeast Asia diplomats and three academic presenters to campus Sept. 18 for ASEAN@50, a conference reflecting on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ first half-century and the challenges facing the region. Organized by new Political Science associate and ASEAN scholar Aarie Glas, the conference divided between the diplomatic perspective in the morning and the academic outlook in the afternoon. Chicago consuls general Generoso D.G. Calonge from the Philippines, Rosmalawati Chalid from Indonesia and Saksee Phromyothi from Thailand addressed the approximately 60 conference attendees in the morning panel moderated by John Brandon, associate director of The Asia Foundation. All three diplomats noted ASEAN’s strengths, citing the region’s $2.3 trillion economy and growing population. Glas moderated the afternoon academic session with Alice Ba (University of Delaware), Shaun Narine (St. Thomas University) and John D. Ciorciari (University of Michigan), all of whom spoke to challenges facing the ASEAN community, such as China’s looming presence in the South China Sea, human rights issues, and organizational and leadership tensions as the region evolves within its charter. In addition to the roughly 40 Center faculty and students in attendance at the ASEAN conference were 20 Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) participants on campus to attend CSEAS’s third round of the five-week U.S. Department of State program.

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Music to their ears
The NIU Gamelan Ensemble loosens up before their set March 7 at Triton College. The ensemble appeared as part of the college’s World Music Series.
In the past four years, CSEAS has strengthened links with area community colleges through guest lectures, SEA language roadshows and cultural events. In particular, though, the Center has worked to bring community college educators to the region, both to expose them to a globalizing world and to devise new Southeast Asia-based curricula they and other teachers can use by downloading from the CSEAS website. With Title VI and Fulbright-Hays funding support, CSEAS associates have taken 14 high school and community educators to Cambodia, the Philippines, and Indonesia since 2015. Two of them, Waubonsee Community College sociologist Kathleen Westman and Sauk Valley Community College political scientist Paul Edelman, culminated their experiences of traveling to both Cambodia and the Philippines by creating their own study abroad program to Cambodia this summer.

More than 100 students crowded a large lecture hall at Waubonsee Feb. 21 to learn about Cambodia before and after the Khmer Rouge Period (1975–79) and to hear about the study abroad program. After an introduction (including his own study abroad experiences) by CSEAS Director Eric Jones, NIU College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Dean and CSEAS associate Judy Ledgerwood (Anthropology) talked about the challenges that have faced Cambodia in rebuilding its society and economy. Westman then discussed the plans for the program (see sidebar, page 15), which she and Edelman designed after traveling with Ledgerwood on a three-week Cambodia study tour in summer 2016. “This is exactly the kind of outcome we have been working toward,” said Jones. “Getting teachers and students to Southeast Asia is the best way to ignite their enthusiasm for learning more.”

Two of the Waubonsee students have now transferred to NIU where they have signed up to for the Southeast Asian Studies minor. When they get to campus, they can continue to explore their interest in Southeast Asia through the Center’s many activities, including our Friday lecture series, cultural events like this year’s Floating Lantern Festival, Songkran Lunar New Year and World Music Concert, and the Southeast Asia Club’s spring student conference, culture nights and noodle fests.
By Kathleen Westman and Paul Edelman

For five community college students from northern Illinois studying for three weeks in Cambodia from May 20 to June 10, the classroom became the wat, the museum, the floating village, the tuk tuk, and the temples of Angkor Wat.

The culmination of three years of development, we were privileged to collaborate with the Center for Khmer Studies (CKS) in Cambodia to create a three-week study abroad program of faculty-led lectures and site visits. The three-credit course offered through Waubonsee Community College, SSC296, was entitled Culture and Civilization of Cambodia and took place in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

“I barely knew anything about Cambodia, but I feel like the activities and CKS lectures will help me learn more about it.”

In the CKS classroom, Professor Son Soubert of the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh presented a lecture on Cambodian culture, history and civilization. How can a developing country pursue growth while protecting its culture and environment? Students engaged in a robust discussion with Dr. Courtney Work, a senior research fellow with CKS whose research interests include the anthropology of religion, development and the environment. NIU anthropologist and Cambodia specialist Judy Ledgerwood lectured and guided students through Angkor Wat artifacts in the Cambodia National Museum.

“My initial reaction to Cambodia is I absolutely love it. I love that so much of our experiences are personal and that the Cambodian people are so welcoming to us. Last year I didn’t even know where Cambodia was!”

Ultimately, the experiences and connections shaped the outcome for these students in ways that were transformative, in showing them who they are and how to be, globally. This study abroad experience offered students a way to understand and connect with their own lives. The program allowed students to practice and understand key cultural concepts, apply them to their own context in ways that encouraged learning. The students returned with a better understanding of who they are as they take meaning from where their experiences and connections are in relation to Cambodia—connecting each of them to a global context.

We wish to thank all those at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, including former Director Ledgerwood, current Director Eric Jones, Outreach Coordinator Colleen Gray and Office Manager Lisa Heal. The seeds for this program began with a trip to Cambodia with Ledgerwood in 2016 funded through CSEAS. With her persistent encouragement and student scholarship support from CSEAS, the program eventually became a reality. We owe many thanks also to Dr. Laura Ortiz, Dr. Johnathan Paver, Amanda Munoz and the leadership at Waubonsee Community College. We owe the program’s success to their collaborative team effort.

As we look forward, we plan to offer the course again in May 2019. Our goal is to eventually offer it through the Illinois Consortium for International Studies and Programs. This consortium will allow students from across the state of Illinois to participate in the program and to experience Cambodia first-hand. As the program matures and grows, the Center for Khmer Studies will continue to be a vital participant in the partnership.

And to the Waubonsee students, we thank you for being the best of the best! Your words used in this essay reflect the transformation experienced by us all.

Kathleen Westman teaches sociology at Waubonsee Community College and Paul Edelman teaches political science at Sauk Valley Community College.
Over the summer, 14 graduate and undergraduate students receiving summer Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships traveled to Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand for intensive language study at approved language schools. Graduate students Kristen Amstutz (MA anthropology), Thommy Brown (MA history) and Kassandra Chhay (MA anthropology) and undergraduates Jakob Daraban and Thomas Phetmeuangmay studied Khmer at the Khmer School of Language in Phnom Penh. Undergraduate Carissa Hartwig studied Indonesian at Wisma Bahasa in Yogyakarta. Graduate students Cameron Foreman (MA history) and Janet Vallejo (MA political science) and undergraduates Kendra Escudero and Ann Hodal studied Tagalog at Central Luzon State University in Manila. Undergraduates Airetta Myrick, Adam Reedy, Elizabeth Russo and Autumn Smith studied Thai at Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai. Summer FLAS is more than just a language-immersion experience most participants agree. “The summer FLAS program provided me with both invaluable Filipino cultural knowledge and irreplaceable memories,” said Cameron Foreman.

In the Philippines
During the Tagalog language immersion program at Central Luzon State University where 2017–18 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Ken Calang, left, now teaches, summer FLAS students learned about culture and survival with the Aeta indigenous community near Subic, Zambales.

Central Luzon State University in Manilla. Undergraduates Airetta Myrick, Adam Reedy, Elizabeth Russo and Autumn Smith studied Thai at Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai. Summer FLAS is more than just a language-immersion experience most participants agree. “The summer FLAS program provided me with both invaluable Filipino cultural knowledge and irreplaceable memories,” said Cameron Foreman.

In Cambodia
From left, Thommy Brown, Jakob Daraban, Kristen Amstutz, teacher Ksl Addheka, Thomas Phetmeuangmay and Kassandra Chhay go over test results at the Khmer School of Language.
A Year in Pictures

Outtakes from 2017–18

Present and accounted for
Graduate and undergraduate students made their marks presenting their papers at the Southeast Asia Club’s Spring Southeast Asia Student Conference April 7. Emory University anthropologist James Hoesterey, far left, gave the keynote speech, “Diplomacy, Soft Power, and the Making of ‘Moderate Islam’ in Indonesia.”

Celebration day
Former CSEAS teaching assistant Iqra Anugrah with CSEAS Director Eric Jones and Political Science Department Chair and CSEAS associate Scot Schraufnagel in the moment after Anugrah successfully defended his doctoral dissertation in June.

Taking the lead
The hardworking 2017–18 officers for Southeast Asia Club included, from left, Rachael Skog, I Younan, Kristen Amstutz, Kallen Terry, Janet Vallejo and Cameron Foreman.

Fancy feet
The Indonesian language class gets ready to perform a dance Nov. 16 at International Culture Night during International Education Week.

Tablescape
Fullbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Arkar Kyaw sets up a Burmese language table in DuSable Hall during International Education Week in November.
Library Notes

Continuing education for Myanmar libraries

By Hao Phan

From May 7 to 23 this past spring, I traveled to Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam to teach two workshops on library open access and to acquire new materials for the Southeast Asia Collection.

The two three-day workshops in Myanmar, which took place May 9–11 at Yangon University and May 14–16 at Yadanabon University, are part of a Henry Luce Foundation-funded project between NIU, the University of Washington and Arizona State University to assist academic libraries in Myanmar in preserving their research materials and making them accessible to researchers in America. About 60 local library professionals attended.

The original Luce funding was a two-year grant (2016 and 2017), but because there were funds remaining in the budget, we were able to extend the project a third year and offer two additional in-country workshops. This was my second time teaching in Myanmar, having led two workshops on library digitization in 2016. This time my topic was copyright, specifically about Creative Commons and Rights, and the publishing industry in Myanmar. The other workshop instructors were Elizabeth Bedford and Anne Graham from University of Washington and Ralph Gabbard from Arizona State.

Copyright, in particular copyright concerning academic publishing, is almost a novelty to authors and librarians in Myanmar. First, authors do not pay attention to their rights over their publications. Second, book piracy is a serious problem in the country, including the illegal reproduction of literature, textbooks, and government publications for commercial purposes. Illegitimate copies of books, for instance, are displayed openly in the major bookstores in Yangon.

Copyright law in Myanmar, which up until early 2018 was still based on the Copyright Act 1914 of the British colonial government, did not cover patents, industrial designs, trademarks, software, and of course digital content. More importantly, the law is rarely enforced. In the context of copyright in Myanmar, thus, the concept of open access might appear unnecessary, and at the same time, suspicious as a form of exploiting intellectual property. It is crucial to address these misconceptions while discussing copyright and open access in Myanmar.

Decades of isolation and information control under the military rule have also made the task of gaining access to research materials in Myanmar a challenge today. The National Archives of Myanmar, for instance, have been digitizing many records from the British colonial period (1824 to 1948), but have not yet made these materials available online, in spite of the fact that by law only records since 1962, the year when the military junta took power in the country, are still off limits. The Universities’ Central Library at University of Yangon has also digitized thousands of the ancient palm-leaf and paper manuscripts, but featured these digitized manuscripts only on its internal website. With further training and financial support for libraries in Myanmar, hopefully more research materials in Myanmar will be made available online for free access in the future.

Apart from teaching the workshops, the other purpose of my trip was for library acquisitions. In addition to purchasing some materials in Myanmar, I traveled to Phnom Penh, Cambodia for three days, and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, for two days, to acquire more. CSEAS provided the funding for the trip from Myanmar to Cambodia and Vietnam; I am grateful for the Center’s strong support in building and maintaining the excellent Southeast Asia Collection at NIU.

Hao Phan is curator of the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection. Joanna Kulma is the collection’s library assistant.
Since 2010, when CSEAS dissolved its publications unit, Southeast Asia Publications (SEAP), Northern Illinois University Press has been the publisher of a Southeast Asia series in partnership with the Center. In addition to continuing to print Clark Neher’s Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World as well as Burmese and Vietnamese language texts originally in the SEAP catalog, NIU Press has published 10 new books, including its latest, Have Fun in Burma, a novel by Rosalie Metro. The Press is currently seeking quality scholarly but accessible book-length manuscripts to consider for its Southeast Asian series. Address inquiries to Kenton Clymer, editor, Southeast Asian Series, NIU Press, at kclymer@niu.edu.

The Clymer papers

This past December the Southeast Asia Collection received a generous donation from CSEAS associate Kenton Clymer (History): 26 boxes of documents and notes that Professor Clymer used for research while writing his first three books. During spring and summer, student worker Christine Dose and I have been working on processing the donation and creating three archival collections. The collections are as follows:

- **The Kenton Clymer India Papers**: A collection of Clymer’s notes for his third book, Quest for Freedom: The United States and India’s Independence (Columbia University Press, 1995).

All three collections will be housed in the basement of Founders Memorial Library and available for researchers in September. More details about the contents of the collections will also be available online at that time.

—Joanna Kulma

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One last look

Every fall for the past three years, CSEAS has brought 21 young adults from Southeast Asia to NIU for a five-week academic fellowship institute supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of State’s Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI). NIU was one of a handful of U.S. campuses chosen to host YSEALI fellows, each institution creating its own program focusing on civic engagement and leadership. Under the direction of Colleen Gray (MA anthropology, 2014), YSEALI fellows at NIU learned about the events and ideas shaping social movements in the U.S., including civil, labor, women’s and disability rights movements, in the process exploring avenues for civic action in their own countries. They attended lectures and workshops on campus, took field trips to Chicago, participated in community service projects and traveled to important civil rights sites in Alabama and Georgia. Upon their return, fellows have been incorporating the lessons and organizing skills they learned into their own community projects. The 2017 fellows pictured here also participated in the Center’s ASEAN@50 conference while they were at NIU, adding their in-country perspectives to the proceedings. With State Department changes in the program, the 2017 group was the last to come to NIU. “I am honored to have had the opportunity to shape the lives of some of the brightest and civically engaged Southeast Asian young adults,” said Gray. “The work they all are accomplishing back in SEA and abroad is remarkable.”

Welcome to the CSEAS donor family

You can help keep Southeast Asian studies at NIU alive and vibrant with your charitable contribution through the NIU Foundation. To contribute by phone, by mail or online, go to the NIU Foundation’s How to Give web page and where indicated, specify “Center for Southeast Asian Studies.” If your employer matches your charitable donations, please take a moment to also fill out that form and double your contribution. Your gifts help us give more students opportunities to expand their knowledge and experience of Southeast Asia. We thank you for your support.

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Front cover photo:
CSEAS Assistant Director Jui-Ching Wang, left, with students at the Taman Siswa school in Bandung, West Java, where she spent her Fulbright year studying children’s singing games.