Field school stories
Students learn the art of the ethnographic interview in Cambodia

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The news cascaded into the Center for Southeast Asian Studies this past fall like
birthday greetings on Facebook:
• the re-funding of the online Malay dictionary project for 2010–11;
• a second year of budgeting for the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP);
• a Foreign Languages and Area Studies (FLAS) program making it possible for NIU to offer 17 undergraduate and graduate students full fellowships in Southeast Asian studies; and
• a new four-year designation as a National Resource Center (NRC) for Southeast Asian Studies that secures CSEAS’s outreach and curriculum programs.

These announcements of solid federal support, from both the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. State Department, were not only acknowledgments of the hard work that CSEAS associates, staff, and students have put in over the years, but more importantly they were signposts for directions the center must take to secure its place in the national network of Southeast Asian studies.

NIU has long boasted a strong infrastructure for Southeast Asian studies: a large and well-known faculty researching and teaching about the region; a vast Southeast Asia library collection of more than 120,000 volumes; a complex Internet resource, SEAsite, for the study of the region’s languages and cultures; and a strong outreach program. Now we are about to build on that strong foundation by launching new courses and detailed, course-specific curricula.

In fall, NIU became the first American university to teach Malay, the national language of Malaysia and Brunei, and an official language of Singapore, in a full program of instruction. By opening a course in beginning Malay, and continuing to offer intermediate and advanced Malay, NIU has gone a long way toward strengthening its language portfolio. Looking ahead, we plan to offer Vietnamese in fall 2012 in order to provide the most comprehensive Southeast Asian language program in the country, offering instruction in all seven national languages of Southeast Asia.

In addition to language learning, though, a strong center must also offer innovative and diverse area studies courses. In fall, NIU offered a new multidisciplinary course, History of the Malay Language, in both graduate and undergraduate sections. Three other new Southeast Asia-focused courses—History of Violence, Political Anthropology, and Political Violence—were also taught for the first time. This spring, there are three new courses: The State and Illegality in Southeast Asia, Global Islam, and The Politics of Identity: Ethnicity, Religion, and Conflict. In the next four years, we are committed to developing new courses in public health, history, political science, business, public administration, and engineering, and possibly women’s studies and geography as well.

Expanding our orbit
With these ambitious plans to expand the Southeast Asia curricular program at NIU, the center is focused on expanding the number of faculty and students involved with Southeast Asia, both on campus and off. This is especially important in light of the retirement of three key CSEAS associates since last spring. Associate Professor Saw Tun, the first Burmese language instructor at NIU, retired in June. Similarly, Anthropology Museum Director Ann Wright-Parsons, curator of NIU’s collection of 12,000 ethnographic and archaeological artifacts, half of which is from Southeast Asia, retired effective Jan. 1 of this year. Her position is already being advertised so that the museum’s renovated collections storage rooms and new exhibition gallery in Cole Hall will continue to maintain a strong profile for Southeast Asian studies on the campus (see Museum Notes, page 26). At the center, CSEAS staff member Caroline Quinlan, who masterfully oversaw the center’s transition from print publications to enhanced Internet communications in 2010, retired in December.

The first strategy for enlargeting the CSEAS circle aims at inviting more NIU faculty into the field. Since fall 2009, CSEAS has worked closely with faculty in the public health program to encourage some of them to choose Southeast Asia for their research areas. Assistant Professor Tomiyuki Shibata, a new CSEAS affiliate, was the first to make a solid commitment to Southeast Asian studies, first by revising his EPFE 530: Comparative and International Education course syllabus this past fall to include 25 percent SEA content and then by spending two weeks at Hasanuddin University, our Indonesian partner university, to develop

By expanding the number of NIU faculty working in Southeast Asia, particularly in the professional colleges, we can diversify the profile and increase the number of NIU students committed to studying about the region.
joint research projects. Two more public health faculty members are working on a research planning team initiated by Shibata and including faculty from the geography department. Alecia Santuzzi (psychology) was made a center affiliate so that she and her students can help CSEAS maintain an effective evaluation program. Shi-Ruei “Sherry” Fang of the Family and Child Studies program, who has long taught about Southeast Asian families, joined CSEAS as an affiliate and is a member of the executive committee.

By expanding the number of NIU faculty working in Southeast Asia, particularly in the professional colleges, we can diversify the profile and increase the number of NIU students committed to studying about the region. In the coming months, we hope to identify more colleagues who can be appointed center affiliates.

A second approach to increasing the center’s reach is to link up with partner institutions in Southeast Asia. Our strong partnership with Hasanuddin University has already heightened Southeast Asian interest in NIU’s public health program. In November, NIU Provost Ray Alden signed a memorandum of understanding with Daing Nasir Ibrahim, vice chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Malaysia’s premier institution for the study of engineering. With center assistance, NIU’s College of Engineering and the International Training Office expect to organize a short course for UMP’s students this spring, while NIU plans to send students to UMP beginning in June. By exchanging students, NIU’s faculty and engineering students can learn more about Southeast Asia. To further this endeavor, an undergraduate engineering course, Technology and Society (TECH 294), is being retooled with new Southeast Asian content.

**Reaching out nationwide**

But we must always remember that as a federally funded resource center, CSEAS is mandated to serve not just our students and faculty, and not just the communities in DeKalb County, but the entire nation. NIU’s long-standing commitment to our national clientele is SEAsite, the country’s pioneering online resource for Southeast Asian languages and area studies. With the help of center associate Jim Henry (computer science), the center has begun discussions to seek funding to renovate this important learning source for Southeast Asia studies. Moreover, through the Mid-America Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies (MAXIS), which was founded by the center in 2009, CSEAS is coordinating efforts with community colleges and other universities to increase education in the region about Southeast Asia. Since fall 2009, CSEAS has collaborated with Texas State University-San Marcos, a charter member of MAXIS, to assist in its development of an undergraduate certificate in Southeast Asian studies. In October, associates Kenton Clymer (history) and Michael Buehler (political science) accompanied me to Texas State for its fifth Southeast Asia workshop with a sixth planned later this spring. With our cooperation, Texas State has launched the first courses in its certificate program. I also traveled last fall to Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., to meet with NIU alumnus and new CSEAS adjunct Michael Hawkins and his colleagues to explore potential Southeast Asia studies workshops and conferences. As a result, Hawkins and another Creighton historian, John Calvert, participated in NIU’s co-sponsored colloquium on Islam in Southeast Europe and Southeast Asia held Jan. 4–5 in Kuala Lumpur in cooperation with the University of Chicago’s NRC Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies (CEERES) and the National University of Malaysia’s Institute for Ethnic Studies (KITA). In another MAXIS initiative, Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville will join forces with the center to spearhead workshops and panels about Southeast Asia and Islam in the Mississippi River region with CSEAS adjunct at Edwardsville, Nancy Lutz, working to establish this new linkage for the center.

**Close to home**

On the high school level, CSEAS outreach coordinator Julie Lamb and center graduate student for outreach Laura Iandola early this year introduced Southeast Asia in a two-hour “in-school field trip” to about 300 Sycamore High School students taking World Cultures classes (see Outreach Update, page 25). This follows on a very successful program of interaction with students and faculty at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) in Aurora in October, when twenty-eight teenagers from Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam met their counterparts in classroom visits and other activities at the school. The Southeast Asian students were participants in the third session of the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP), a U.S. State Department
One link at a time

A delegation from the Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) visits the center Nov. 22 while at NIU to sign a memorandum of understanding and to discuss cooperating with the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology and the center. From left are Associate Provost for International Programs Deborah Pierce; Rozita Rosli, education attaché from Education Malaysia in Evanston, Ill.; Dr. Wan Norlidah Al Qadri, Director, International Office, UMP; center director Jim Collins; Dr. Daing Mohd. Nasir bin Daing Ibrahim, UMP vice chancellor; Dr. Badruhilsham Abdul Aziz, UMP deputy vice chancellor; and Mohd. Raizalhilmy bin Mohd. Rais, UMP senior assistant registrar.
School was out, but another round of travel was in over semester break when the NIU team of Chris McCord, Deborah Pierce, and James T. Collins returned to Southeast Asia for the fourth time in an effort to strengthen existing relationships and to build new ties with universities in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.

“As NIU’s students seek education opportunities in Southeast Asia, we need strong partners to assist them. We also need to explore other structures for cooperation so that students and faculty from the region can join us at NIU for their studies and research,” Collins said.

In Malaysia, the National University of Malaysia signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with NIU during the Jan. 4-5 Islam in Southeast Europe and Southeast Asia conference co-sponsored by the university, CSEAS, and the Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies at the University of Chicago. The team also visited another partner university, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, to plan for the upcoming visit of NIU’s dean and associate dean of engineering in March and to organize a Malay language program for NIU students in June. McCord and Pierce also visited Nilai University College to discuss collaborative efforts, and later in the trip visited the U.S. embassy in Kuala Lumpur to discuss future directions for NIU initiatives to attract students from Malaysia.

In Thailand, Collins, McCord, and Pierce visited the four NIU partner academic institutions there—Payap University in Chiang Mai, where they discussed opening an NIU PhD program taught in the region, and Chulalongkorn and Thammasat universities, and the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) in Bangkok. At NIDA, center associates Kurt Thurmaier (public administration) and Curtis Wood (public administration) were also there to advance their joint research project with their Thai colleagues. NIDA later hosted a banquet for the entire NIU contingent, including professor and center associate Danny Unger (political science), who has been active in networking with NIU alumni in Thailand and facilitating the Bangkok Research Seminar for PhD students working on dissertations in the country. Meetings and venues in Thailand were set up by associate professor and center associate Andrea Molnar (anthropology), who has long been active in establishing MOUs in Thailand, Collins said. NIU also hosted a banquet for NIU alumni in the Bangkok area.

Before McCord and Pierce’s arrival in Malaysia, Collins visited Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Pontianak, an Islamic university in Pontianak, Indonesia, where he met with linguist colleagues and presented two talks: one about the languages of Islam and the other about NIU’s Malay dictionary project. While in Malaysia he also gave two public lectures about the dictionary project, one at Malaysia's National Language Planning agency, where he shared ideas about dictionaries and the contemporary Malay language with twenty-five lexicography specialists.
Visiting Scholars

The Sandwich Program: Reflections of a faculty mentor

By Doris Macdonald

Editor’s note: Fifteen PhD scholars from Hasanuddin, Makassar State, and Sam Ratulangi universities in Sulawesi spent the fall semester at NIU in an exchange program funded by the Indonesia Department of Education and coordinated by the center with the cooperation of the Division of International Programs.

Nicknamed the Sandwich Program because the students’ NIU activities were fitted in between their regular academic programs at their home institutions, the informal program drew on NIU’s diverse faculty members to serve as mentors for the equally diverse group of students. Associate English professor Doris Macdonald was one of them.

When Jim Collins first asked me if I would be willing to act as a faculty advisor for a visiting scholar on a “sandwich program” from Indonesia, little did I know that I would meet and work with five advanced scholars from Sulawesi whose scholarship and teaching interests were so varied and well-developed. Two of my Indonesian colleagues are doing research in teaching English as a foreign language, while another is teaching Indonesian. Still another is pursuing sociolinguistic research in Kendari and yet another is analyzing Buginese pantun (a four-line poem) using literary theory.

NIU’s faculty and facilities provided these Indonesian scholars with a wealth of resources, direction, expertise, and advice. While I may have pointed them to a local colleague or to a library resource, the scholars immersed themselves in their research projects and took advantage of many university events—sitting in on classes when they could, attending CSEAS’s weekly lectures and other guest events in Chicago. While doing research and attending classes at NIU during fall semester, the group traveled to Chicago and to several other U.S. cities before returning to Sulawesi in early December.

Associate English professor Doris Macdonald, second from left, with mentorees, from left, Sudarmin Harun, Syamsidar Murad, Andi Tenri Ampa, and Syahruddin at a December ceremony where the fifteen visiting Indonesian scholars received certificates of completion.

Buttoned up against the weather, the center’s visiting scholars from Indonesia visit Chicago on a particularly windy fall day.
seminars, and helping to host the new Indonesian ambassador to the United States [Dino Patti Djalal] when he visited NIU in fall.

Meeting with these colleagues on at least a weekly basis helped me to understand some of the unique and sometimes challenging issues they face in pursuing research in South Sulawesi, but it also helped me to understand how rich, rewarding, and diverse their teaching contexts are. Andi Tenri Ampa and Syahruddin are creating state-of-the-art computer applications to teach English and Indonesian; Waode Hanafiah (Fiah) is using the most recent research in interactive language teaching to create a new English grammar teaching curriculum; Sudarmin Harun is developing a "grand theory" to draw together his literary analysis; and Syamsidar Marud (Sam) has developed a methodology to gather data on language acquisition and use as related to social class. Each of these projects is certain to enhance the teaching and research profiles of these scholars and of their academic departments and institutions.

I wish I had had more opportunities to get to meet all the sandwich program scholars, but I certainly benefited from hearing the final reports of their research projects, and I enjoyed our time together at the final farewell ceremony. I hope one major lasting outcome for all these colleagues is that they feel a personal, individual connection to Northern and our faculty. I look forward to staying in touch and following the research of my new friends and colleagues. Best wishes especially to those I came to know best: Sam, Sudarmin, Fiah, Syahruddin, and Andi.

Other NIU faculty mentors serving as mentors for the visiting Indonesian scholars were Carl Campbell III (economics), Kurt Thurmaier (public administration), Andrea Molnar and Susan Russell (anthropology), and CSEAS director Jim Collins (foreign languages and literatures).

Leang Un,  
Institute of Social Science Research,  
University of Amsterdam

For three and a half months during the Fall semester, Cambodian scholar Leang Un was holed up in the Southeast Asia collections at Founders Library and interacting with Southeast Asia experts on campus working on his dissertation. Un, was currently on leave from his position teaching philosophy at the Royal University of Phnom Penh. He has been pursuing his PhD through the University of Amsterdam's Institute of Social Science Research where he is involved in an interdisciplinary, multi-country research project looking at comparisons between Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia in terms of their different level of economic developments. The purpose of the project, which is being funded by the Dutch Foreign Ministry, is to discern new and improved ways for donor countries like the Netherlands and the United States to assist such countries in charting and tracking their development.

Un’s research has involved closely looking at Cambodia and Uganda. “The two countries have similar histories and tragedies in the 1970s, followed by civil war,” Un said. “In the postwar period, both countries have been dependent on foreign aid.” But there are differences in how the countries are progressing, he said, with Cambodia slightly edging out Uganda. In Cambodia, for example, he said, there is a higher rate of education and a higher gross domestic product per capita than in Uganda. Why and how that is the case, and digging into other comparisons between the countries, has been the focus of Un’s dissertation, which he plans to complete in 2012.

Un left DeKalb in January to return to his home in Cambodia for two weeks to visit his wife and seven-year-old son. From there he will return to the University of Amsterdam to complete his dissertation writing.
Development of multimedia online dictionary of Malay gets underway

For the past year and a half, a team of five scholars in NIU’s departments of computer science, foreign languages and literatures, and history has joined forces to create and pilot a major new Malay dictionary for the use of learners studying the Malay language. When complete in 2012, The Multimedia Online Learner’s Dictionary of Malay will be the first scholarly Malay-English dictionary released in more than eighty years, and the first in a series of planned major additions to NIU’s Southeast Asia language and culture website, SEAsite.

Creating this unique dictionary resource is a big job, acknowledged center director and linguist James T. Collins, who has been working on the project with center associates Jim Henry (computer science) Patricia Henry (foreign languages and literatures), Eric Jones (history), and Robert Zerwekh (computer science). In the past year, the faculty team has been aided by project manager Darus Tharim, a native Malay speaker, four to five graduate assistants who have been writing draft entries under Collins’ supervision, and two to three undergraduate assistants who have helped enter edited entries and revise earlier ones. After many revisions and improvements, Zerwekh has developed an editing program for the input stage of the dictionary and a presentation program that shows how the future users of the dictionary will interface with the project. Two preliminary handbooks have also been produced for team members: one a guide to data entry, the other directions for compiling dictionary entries.

Work on the dictionary hasn’t just taken place on campus either, Collins said. Since November 2009, there have been seven public seminars to disseminate information about this innovative dictionary project in the U.S., Germany, Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia, with two more planned for this spring. About 800 entries are now under construction at various phases of completion with plans to complete 1,000 main entries by August.

Funded since 2009 by a three-year $534,000 grant to the center from the U.S. Department of Education’s International Research and Studies Program, the new dictionary will be unique in the two ways it differs from existing dictionaries: technological and sociological.

First, the new dictionary will take advantage of available technological resources, Collins said. It will be an online Malay-English dictionary accessed through SEAsite, and it will incorporate multimedia features (audio and visual) as well as advanced search capacity. Indeed, the compiling of the dictionary uses the search engines of the internet as its corpora in order to find new words, refine definitions of long-known words, and find appropriate illustrative sentences and phrases to make the entries more useful to the user.

Second, the dictionary is drawing on the sociological diversity of Malaysia’s multiethnic communities to incorporate the contemporary Malay language of today’s society while reflecting the country’s diversity. It is being aimed at American learners of Malay, so it is essential that the dictionary provide sociological information taken for granted in other dictionaries, Collins said. For example, it is important for non-native learners of Malay to know how Malaysians use terms of address to mark ethnicity and politeness. Malaysians learn these distinctions at a very young age, but existing dictionaries do not provide this information for Malay language learners, Collins said.

Moreover, words in everyday use but that are often overlooked in today’s monolingual (Malay-Malay) dictionaries need to be included in a learner’s dictionary. Words as mundane as those related to contemporary technology like air conditioning and cell phones as well as widespread loanwords from Iban, Hokkien, English and other sources should be included to prepare language learners for today’s Malaysia. Learners also need to know differences in vocabulary based on ethnicity and religious affiliation, Collins noted.

To provide users with basic knowledge about the language that supports the contemporary Malaysia's complex society, the dictionary must take into account modern language use by all segments of Malaysian society, according to Collins. Unlike its predecessors, it won’t be a dictionary based on classical Malay literature, but one based on today’s newspapers, pamphlets and online sources, ranging from blogs and social network sites to government ministry websites and electronic doctoral thesis abstracts, he said.
Michael Buehler (political science)  
- interviewed Nov. 1 about current Indonesian government by journalist Jimmy Manan for Voice of America broadcast.  

Kenton Clymer (history)  
- published “China as a Factor in American Policy toward Southeast Asia: A Review from the Nineteenth Century to the George W. Bush Administration” in the *Silliman Journal* 49.1 (2008), which was printed October 2010.

John Hartmann (foreign languages and literatures)  
- will be the keynote speaker at the international conference, Thai and Asian: Language, World View, Culture, May 26–27 at Kasetsart University, Bangkok.  
- will present “Hidden Histories and Disappearing Environments” at the 11th International Conference on Thai Studies, Visions of the Future, July 26–28 at Mahidol University, Bangkok.

Eric Jones (history)  

Kheang Leang (foreign languages and literatures)  
- was invited by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages to Sept. 8–10, 2010 workshop at the Defense Languages Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, Calif.

Judy Ledgerwood (anthropology)  
- co-authored with Kheang Un (political science) “Is the Trial of ‘Duch’ a Catalyst for Change in Cambodia’s Courts?” in the East-West Center journal *AsiaPacific Issues* 95 (June 2010).  
- has returned from a five-month sabbatical in Cambodia where she conducted research for book on evolving social relations in a Cambodian village over 50 years.

Wei Luo (geography)  

Grant Olson (foreign languages and literatures)  
- traveled to Thailand in spring 2010 for a one-month research trip, partially funded by the CSEAS Thai Teaching and Research Endowment Fund.  
- presented “A Sandy Path near a Lake: Translating a Southern Thai Autobiography” with center associate Chalermsee Olson (Founders Library) at the Council on Thai Studies meeting Oct. 29–30 at University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Catherine Raymond (art history)  
- discussed Burmese cosmology and Lao and Thai mural paintings in a special lecture, “New and Renew,” held Jan. 27 in conjunction with the NIU School of Art Faculty Biennial Exhibition: Sabbatical Research and Publications (2009–10).

A member of the tribe  
Professor Susan Russell (anthropology), center in purple scarf, was made an honorary member of the indigenous Manobo tribe in the Philippines in January, the first non-Filipino to receive the honor. For the past eight years, center associates Russell and Lina Davide-Ong of the NIU International Training Office have directed the Philippine Youth Leadership Program, funded by the U.S. State Department, to help bring peace to the conflict-torn region of southern Mindanao, working with teenagers and young adults on conflict resolution and leadership skills. In fall, they welcomed twelve young adult leaders from indigenous and minority communities to NIU for three weeks of training. In April twenty-two Muslim and non-Muslim teenagers and four adult leaders will arrive at NIU for a five-week exchange and leadership training program.
Center Council News and Notes (cont’d)

Susan Russell  (anthropology)
• traveled to Davao City, the Philippines, Oct. 25–Nov. 6 for Philippine Youth Leadership Program follow-on program.
• attended the U.S. State Department Recipients’ Symposium in Washington, D.C., in October.
• directed second group of 13 young adult leaders of various minority ethnic groups in the southern Philippines (Muslim and indigenous) participating in Empowering Minority Leaders project at NIU (funded by U.S. State Department) in October.
• was elected secretary of the NIU chapter of international scholar honor society, Phi Beta Delta.

Kurt Thurmaier  (public administration)
• edited with Suzanne Leland Case Studies in City-County Consolidation: Promises Made, Promises Kept? (Georgetown University Press, 2010).

Kheang Un  (political science)
• has been awarded a third Research Grant of Tracking Development by the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands.
• presented in May at the Third Plenary Conference of Tracking Development, funded by the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
• presented “Rhetoric or Reality: Rural Bias Policy in Uganda and Cambodia” in June at KITLV, University of Leiden.
• completed a summer visiting fellowship at the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV), University of Leiden.

Danny Unger  (political science)
• organized a seminar in June on decentralization in Thailand at the National Institute of Development Administration, Chulalongkorn University, for scholars from NIDA, Chulalongkorn, other institutions, and the World Bank.
• presented “Looking for Good News in Recent Thai Political Developments” at the Council on Thai Studies meeting Oct. 29–30 at University of Wisconsin-Madison.
• participated in briefing for new U.S. Ambassador to Thailand Kristie Kenney Nov. 8 in Washington, D.C.
• continues to oversee the monthly Bangkok Research Seminar, begun in April 2010 to serve the needs of PhD students there, both Thai and foreign, working on their dissertations.

Faculty Spotlight - Michael Buehler

This image has been redacted

In his office at 418 Zulauf, assistant political science professor Michael Buehler takes a break between classes. (CSEAS photo)

By Liz Poppens Denius
Assistant political science professor Michael Buehler grew up in a tiny village of 600 outside Zurich, Switzerland, and found his way to a larger world early on. “My godfather worked for Nestlé, which buys a lot of spices from Southeast Asia,” said Buehler, who joined NIU’s political science department in fall. “He was sent to Indonesia in 1985 and I visited him for a couple of weeks as a boy. I was so impressed I kept going back.”

At 18, Buehler traveled to Bali and Sumatra with two friends for six months. After meeting several biologists who were studying orangutans in Sumatra, he thought he might want to study behavioral biology. But the conditions for studying wildlife were harsh, Buehler said, and he found himself more intrigued in the behavioral aspects of people than animals. “And politics always fascinated me,” he said. So the prospective biological

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scientist became a political scientist instead and Indonesia became his laboratory.

Buehler, 34, who received both his PhD in political science and a master’s degree in comparative politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science, came to NIU with years of experience as a research fellow, consultant, and political analyst. Most recently he was a postdoctoral fellow from 2008 to 2010 at Columbia University’s Weatherhead East Asian Institute, where he taught two courses on contemporary Southeast Asian politics and political corruption in the region. Prior to that, Buehler’s research on local Indonesian politics led him to work as a consultant on anti-corruption monitoring strategies for the World Bank and a governance project involving local administrative reforms in Indonesia for the United Nations Development Programme, among other development programs. He has also produced political-risk evaluations for various mining and oil companies in Southeast Asia. In addition to being a visiting research fellow at the Royal Netherlands Institute on Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden in the late-2000s, Buehler served as political analyst for the Asia and Pacific department of Transparency International and for the Asia Research Unit of the German Institute for International Affairs and Security in Berlin.

Buehler is happy to be able to continue combining research and teaching in his new post at NIU, he said. This year, he is teaching POLS 371, The Politics of Southeast Asia, and POLS 672, a graduate course on the causes and consequences of corruption. On the research side, he is interested in broadening his comparative focus, bringing Asia and Africa together under the microscope to examine how development, politics, and corruption play out in different contexts.

“Does corruption have a negative influence on economic programs, for example? China is ranked the same as Angola in Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index, but China is doing well and Angola is not,” he said. These are the kinds of important questions facing the developing world today, with implications for the developed world as well, he added.

In his spare time, Buehler enjoys movies, music, traveling and exploring new cities, which he has been doing in earnest since moving to Illinois where understanding local politics is a science unto its own. “Being here is similar in many ways to being in Indonesia,” said Buehler, who plans to head back to the country as well as Malaysia over the summer to continue his research. “I feel quite foreign here, and in that sense, it’s as inspiring as being in Indonesia.”

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**Faculty books on Southeast Asia**

*Released or reviewed in 2010*


**James T. Collins** (director, CSEAS), co-editor with Dr. Chong Shin, *Bahasa di Selat Makassar dan Samudera Pasific* (Institute Alam dan Tamudun Melayu, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia). A collection of seven essays about language use in eastern Indonesia. Many of the essays were written as part of a research project about Sulawesi languages led by Collins from 2005 to 2008. Authors include scholars from Indonesia, Japan and the U.S. Topics range from the history of Malay in eastern Indonesia (Collins) and of Ternate (Gufran) as well as of Buginese in Papua (Sukardi) to language classification (Yamaguchi) and mapping (Abdul Rajab) in southern Sulawesi as well as verbal morphology in Maluku (Patty) and north Sulawesi (Rurut). 978-983-2457-17-6.

**Forthcoming in 2011**

**Kheang Un** (political science), co-editor and co-author of two chapters with Caroline Hughes, *Cambodia's Economic Transformation* (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press). This cross-disciplinary study looks at the impact of Cambodia’s 2002–08 economic boom on governance, economic structure, and opportunities for the poor. 978-8-77694-082-9.

**Trude Jacobsen** (history), *The Historical Dictionary of Women in Southeast Asia* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press). For anyone interested in gender issues in Southeast Asia past and present, this reference tool details names, events, and practices of particular significance for women in the region; includes chronology and detailed bibliography. 978-0-81085-968-5.
M. Ladd Thomas, NIU political science professor emeritus whose involvement with CSEAS goes back to the center’s founding in 1963, and center associate Ann Wright-Parsons, recently retired director of the NIU Anthropology Museum, were honored Oct. 15 as two of eleven people receiving the 2010 Distinguished Alumni, Faculty, and Staff Awards given by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS).

Thomas, who retired in 2005 after 42 years at NIU, was co-nominated by the center and the political science department. Wright-Parsons was nominated by the anthropology department.

Thomas joined NIU’s political science department in 1963 after earning his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Utah and his PhD from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Soon after arriving on campus, the dean of CLAS appointed him the first director of CSEAS. Thomas also was a key figure in the college’s role in establishing an early Peace Corps training site for Southeast Asia at NIU. During Thomas’s career at NIU, he served as chair of the political science department and as a respected mentor of graduate students, directing numerous dissertations and developing the department’s strength in Thai studies.

A former Fulbright scholar to the Philippines and Thailand, Thomas is a widely published authority in Southeast Asian politics and governments, particularly Thailand. His areas of expertise also include rural development administration in Southeast Asia and international relations, particularly foreign policies and security concerns of selected Southeast Asian countries. In 1986, the King of Thailand awarded him with the prestigious Crown of Thailand medal for research and other academic as well as advisory contributions to Thailand. In 2001, he received NIU’s Outstanding International Educator Award from the Division of International Programs. In 2008, the president of Thailand’s National Institute of Development Administration declared Thomas a founder of that institute. Thomas lives in DeKalb and returns to campus frequently to visit with colleagues and attend events and lectures.

Wright-Parsons, who received her master’s degree in anthropology with a concentration in Southeast Asian studies from NIU in 1993, served as director of the NIU Anthropology Museum for nine years. She retired in January, having spent the past year working to establish the museum’s move from the Stevens Building into new exhibition and upgraded storage spaces in Cole Hall, currently under renovation and scheduled to be completed in the fall (see Museum Notes, page 26). Prior to returning to NIU as museum director in 2001, Wright-Parsons worked as a senior assistant to the curator of the Asian collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Over the years as director of the anthropology museum, Wright-Parsons curated a number of exhibits involving Southeast Asia, drawing from NIU’s extensive collection of ethnographic, archaeological, and physical anthropological materials in addition to outside sources. One of her most recent exhibits was Cambodia Born Anew, a joint effort with the Cambodian American Heritage Museum in Chicago. She is credited with increasing the number of students receiving certificates in museum studies at NIU, and has served as a mentor to many of them as they have entered the professional world. Wright-Parsons now lives in Vermont.
Day three deserves attention, but I am unable to give it all it deserves right now. Today was what Dr. Ledgerwood called the hardest day of the entire trip; today I saw Tuol Sleng and the killing fields. I predict nightmares tonight. The prison echoed the energy of thousands of people pushed to the limit of humanity. More later . . . I will try to write like a good blogger tomorrow, in an effort to communicate the emotions I have experienced over merely the past 48 hours.

— Excerpt from blog by Emily Dow, summer 2010 Cambodia ethnographic field school participant

By Liz Poppens Denius

Just getting to Cambodia from DeKalb is no small feat: 13 hours over the ocean in one leg of the 24-hour trip, changing planes—at least three of them—and finessing customs and security each time. But for students participating in last summer’s ethnographic field school in Cambodia led by professor and center associate Judy Ledgerwood (anthropology), it was a major step out of the comfort zone at home and into another world.

“At first I was very nervous to travel to a country which most people consider remote and under-developed,” said Emily Dow, a senior in anthropology at NIU. “Once I arrived, however, I was so overwhelmed by the exciting new atmosphere that my fears became unimportant.”

Dow was one of twelve American undergraduate and graduate students, five from NIU, who traveled to Phnom Penh in July to participate in the field school, the third such ethnographic-methodology program led by Ledgerwood in Cambodia (the others were in 2003 and 2007). Once in the capital city, and after two days of orientation to Cambodian culture and religion at the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA), the American students joined up with eighteen undergraduate RUFA students to learn ethnographic methods and take them out into the field.

The field school, a collaboration between RUFA’s archaeology department and NIU’s anthropology department, is focused

continued on page 14
on the rebirth of Buddhism in Cambodia since the fall of the Khmer Rouge, which outlawed all religious practices during its repressive 1975–79 regime. “All of the buildings were razed, Buddhas smashed, and monks killed. It did effectively eradicate religion,” said Ledgerwood, who returned from a five-month sabbatical in Cambodia in January.

After the Khmer Rouge were routed by Vietnam in 1979, religion was allowed to slowly come back during Vietnam’s occupation of the country until 1989 and UN-supervised elections in 1993. Since then, there has been a resurgence of Buddhism in the country.

Ledgerwood and her students have been documenting the rekindling of Buddhist practice and the re-establishment of local temples through interviews with village elders, monks, and other residents in small communities within a 40-mile radius of Phnom Penh. Their research this time focused on nine temples in communities on the south side of Phnom Penh; the two previous schools focused on the southeast side of the city in 2003 and the northwest side in 2007.

Before going out in the field, all of the students trained up on the ethnographic research methods they would use in the field, Ledgerwood said. They learned how to conduct structured and semi-structured interviews, participant and structured observations, life histories, and site mapping and photography. “The students had to do each technique in the field,” Ledgerwood said. “Then for the next two and a half weeks, they would go out to the countryside every day, starting at 6:30 a.m. and getting back at 3 p.m.”

The students, Cambodian and American, were divided up into three- and four-person teams, with the Cambodians serving as translators as necessary and the Americans learning how to work in an unfamiliar environment. For students, learning to negotiating that relationship, while successfully completing their research on site, is a “very big part” of the field-school experience, Ledgerwood said.

And not always easy. “For me, language was the big takeaway,” said NIU senior Emily Kruse, a contract Southeast Asian Studies major who worked with two translators with differing English capabilities. “It could be pretty difficult at times because they didn’t always know what I wanted. We had to learn how to work together because we were all doing research. While my vocabulary didn’t grow as much, my listening skills definitely improved a lot.”

It also helped that the student researchers were usually warmly welcomed. “Buddhist temples in Cambodia are places where elders go to hang out,” Ledgerwood said. “So to have these young people come, Americans and Cambodians, the elders rise to the occasion. They want to tell their stories.”

Because Ledgerwood’s project has been conducted over a decade and across a region, it was important that this group of students ask the same questions and use the same research techniques as in the two previous field schools to allow for congruent comparison of the data from all three, Ledgerwood said. But the project didn’t necessarily start out with that emphasis.

“When I designed this whole thing, I thought this was primarily a teaching exercise,” she said. “When I got back the results, I thought, ‘This is really valuable data!’ No one’s really looking at Buddhist practice at the village level.”

Notes from the field: Emily Dow

My favorite experiences during the field school, simple as it might sound, came from my everyday interactions with locals. Even though there was a bit of a language gap, the warmth and sincerity that I got from people during even simple interactions, like buying water from a street vendor, was impossible to misunderstand. As an anthropology student, being able to go to another country and have meaningful interactions with local people and a chance to try participant observation was a big deal for me. Learning about anthropology and doing anthropology are two very different things. I consider myself incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to travel to Cambodia with Dr. Judy Ledgerwood, an expert and icon in her own right. Seeing how highly respected she is within the Cambodian academic community was inspiring to me.

My first day alone in the field was a Buddhist holiday. There were a lot more people at the temple than there would be in subsequent days, and all eyes were on me. Everyone was curious to know why I was there, and luckily they were also friendly and helped me feel included in the holiday activities.

Doing interviews in the field was (obviously) a new experience for me. I had the help of two Cambodian university students who worked as my colleagues and translators. Using translators while doing interviews was frustrating at times, because I knew that I was missing out on important data, like the figures of speech and tone used by the speaker. The experience emphasized the importance of speaking the local language and I’m more determined than ever to become multi-lingual.
Some of the results, for example, indicate that while the number of Buddhist monks today in Cambodia (60,000), is greater than before the war, and there are more temples (4,000) than before the war, there are fewer monks per person. “Recruitment is down dramatically,” Ledgerwood said, because there are better opportunities to go through the state education system than through temple schools, which used to be the main avenue of education for many Cambodians.

Meanwhile, however, the ongoing reconstruction of local temples is a “success story,” Ledgerwood said.

And for many of the students helping to document that story in Cambodia, life will never be the same after a summer in the field. With access to the entire body of research from the three field schools, two students are incorporating some of it into their master’s theses, Ledgerwood said. Kruse, who will graduate in May, remained in Cambodia and later Thailand after the field school to conduct her own research (funded by a USOAR grant) on the changing impact of Buddhism today on young people in the region. Dow, who also graduates in spring, is applying to NIU’s graduate program in anthropology.

“Because of this trip, most of my friends and family now know more about Cambodia than they ever wanted to, and I find myself talking to strangers about my experience all the time,” Dow said. “I wish that everyone could have the opportunity to study abroad, and I encourage everyone I know to take the extra initiative and get out there. The world has opened up for me, and is somehow both a larger and smaller place now that I have gotten to explore it further.”

Editor’s note: The three other NIU students participating in the Cambodia field school were Eleanor Fritz (undergraduate, anthropology), Shawn McCafferty (PhD candidate, political science), and Jordan York (MA candidate, anthropology).
By the end of spring, four groups of Southeast Asian high school students will have gone through the center’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP), beginning in fall 2009. That represents 106 students, 22 adult leaders, and $535,000 in funding from the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. In many ways, however, the numbers are just beginning to add up.

Since returning home, SEAYLP participants have been putting project plans they developed at NIU into action, launching community projects ranging from a childhood cancer awareness project in Vietnam to an environmental action club in Cambodia. While reaching out to their communities and peers, they are also staying in close touch with each other, sharing ideas on e-mail, networking through a SEAYLP Connections page established by the center on Facebook and individual group Facebook pages, and sometimes getting together through the U.S. embassies in their countries. Several Brunei and Laos students have visited their SEAYLP friends in Singapore. Many responded to a center request for anecdotes for a presentation, “A Day in the Life of a Southeast Asian Teenager,” put together by the center’s outreach department to give to area high schools studying world cultures (see Outreach Update, page 25). This spring, the center will launch a SEAYLP alumni newsletter as another way to keep participants in touch with what their counterparts are doing.

The State Department, which sponsors SEAYLP among other youth leadership programs around the world including the NIU International Training Office’s Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP), is watching the SEAYLP alumni groups’ progress closely. “We are very proud of our participants, and particularly the ideas and energy they put forward to complete projects that serve others in their home communities,” said Carolyn Lantz, branch chief of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs’ Youth Programs Division.

Here are snapshots of some SEAYLP alumni projects so far:

**Fall 2009 / Brunei Darussalam**

The Brunei group was up and running as soon as it returned home with an idea for an “Amazing Race”-style event to help young people in their country learn more about Brunei’s history and culture. After months in the planning, and working closely with Brunei’s Ministry of Education, 63 high school students representing 21 teams hit the pavement on Nov. 29, 2010, in the Rediscover Brunei Race at Maktab Sains Paduka Seri Begawan Sultan. The theme of the race was “Culture: A Treasure for the Youth.” SEAYLP organizers set up the race events to put participants’ brains and brawn to the test. Among the twelve events, teams had to make a traditional kite, learn and perform a Bruneian dance,
identify disguised traditional foods by taste, prepare ambuyat (a traditional Bruneian porridge made from the filtered pith of sago palms) to judges’ satisfaction, play a word game using classical Bruneian words, and identify traditional folk songs and costumes. The Ministry of Education’s Dayang Noridah Binti Abdullah said in a local newspaper article that preserving Brunei’s culture is a primary goal for the ministry, noting that Brunei’s rapidly changing society poses significant challenges to preserving the country’s culture and traditions.

**Fall 2009 / Cambodia**

Upon its return, the Cambodia group established a community organization, the Alumni Environmental Youth Club (AEYC), to raise the awareness of the litter problem in Kampong Cham City. On May 17, 2010, the group, led by SEAYLP alumna Ban Sophorn Watey, organized a cleanup campaign May 17 in the city’s Children’s Park that attracted Kampong Cham city governor Thuch That and more than 450 students, teachers, monks, and U.S. embassy staff members. After everyone gathered, more than thirty rubbish bins were awarded to the city authority to be placed in public places where litter accumulates. The group then marched together, collecting litter along the waterfront, with some individuals shouting environmental slogans through megaphones: “Good environment! Good health! Together we can clean our environment!” The city governor, who had met with the group to schedule the event, encouraged more public actions to improve the city, remarking that he hoped that young people would become future government officials, teachers, doctors, engineers, and other professionals in Cambodia.

Prior to the May event, the Cambodia group also conducted a public environmental campaign to get people to take action to clean up litter and trash to improve the quality of life for city residents as well as city visitors. The group also conducted Earth Day events and met with about 140 students.

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**Words into action**

If a picture paints a thousand words,  
Doesn’t this clearly describe SEAYLP?  
In the beginning, there were 28 individuals,  
All grouped together at Chicago O’Hare airport,  
Strangers to one another, getting acquainted,  
At the ending, there were 28 individuals,  
All staying for a while at Days Inn,  
Family members amongst each other, saying goodbye,  
Isn’t it amazing what 25 days together can do?

If a picture paints a thousand words,  
Let’s travel back in time and look at the albums,  
At all the times we spent together,  
From the theatre and the arts session with Shana,  
To the Halloween party, what a blast it was!  
From the Welcome Luncheon,  
To the water testing sites,  
From learning about the river ecology,  
To studying about the great Abraham Lincoln,  
From our time with our foster families,  
To the times shopping at WALMART and BestBuy!  
From the interesting trips all over America,  
To the ‘exhilarating’ DIPLOMACY SIMULATION!  
From Day 1 to Day 25.

If a picture paints a thousand words,  
I would draw a big heart surrounding that picture,  
Signifying all the friendships we have fostered,  
Treasuring them till the day we leave this Earth,  
SEAYLP has truly been a once-in-a-lifetime experience,  
Something that does not happen every day in our lives,  
I’m sure we are missing one another,  
I see posts of people dreaming of SEAYLP here and there,  
Memories of SEAYLP flashing randomly in our minds,  
Although, it’s only been slightly more than a week since we all parted,  
I miss all of you SEAYLPers!

They say all good things come to an end,  
Yet, I can safely say that this is only the beginning of something new,  
We’ll all meet again someday in the future,  
As leaders making a difference in the world,  
Let’s make SEAYLP our inspiration!  
The future’s in our hands!  
A SEAYLP reunion will definitely be planned  
However, we have to do something first!  
The Action Plan’s the first step,  
Education’s next,  
The future is yet to be written,  
Emulate Abraham Lincoln!  
Let’s make the most of it!  
Let’s change the world for the better!  
Let’s make a difference!

— Posted by Kyle Chan, fall 2010 SEAYLP participant,  
on the SEAYLP blog, Dec. 1, 2010
at Dei Dos High School in April to encourage youth involvement in keeping the city clean, involving the students in environment-related games, group discussions, and a rubbish-collection contest. In June, the group shared “eco-games” especially designed for visually and hearing impaired children in a special event at the Krousar Thmei Organization for Blind and Deaf Children. The group concluded its environmental action project with a celebration later in June, inviting city officials, AYEYC members (now numbering about 60), community members, and some embassy staff.

Over the course of a year since his return, Thearith Sreang helped his home village of Boeng Basak, about 77 miles northeast of Phnom Penh in the Kampong Cham province, build its first community library. Village authorities granted space for the library in an abandoned brick room in the village’s aging primary school. About 200 residents and village elders, led by a group of village youth including Thearith, began work on the project in May 2010. They repaired, cleaned and painted the room, raised funds to buy bamboo to make bookshelves, and sought donations for supplies and books. The shelves were finally filled in early March 2011, and the library was officially opened March 5. “We hope we will be able to start a new mission now,” Thearith said.

**Fall 2009 / Singapore**
A little more than five months after their return home, the Singapore group, all students at Commonwealth Secondary School, held a three-band dance party on April 17, 2010, to raise public awareness of recycling among their peers. Only those party-goers bringing newspapers, plastics, other recyclable or reusable items in good condition, along with paid admission, were allowed into the event. SEAYLP organizers Soon Kah Leong, Gabriel Goh, Tan Qiuying, Vivian Chan, Diamanta Lavania, and Noor Amirah collaborated with three other school groups in organizing the event. They persuaded seven companies to sponsor the event, including Darlie, Garnier Men, Haaru.com, Nutrition Park, 77th Street, Starbucks and THM, a distributor of sports apparel. By the end of the event, there was a looming pile of recyclables at the door.

**Fall 2009 / Vietnam**
Five alumni from the Vietnam group launched a website project in June 2010 to build more awareness of childhood cancer in Vietnam and to raise funds to support Vietnamese children affected by the disease. The group launched the website (in Vietnamese), after recruiting ten more high school students in June to help, with a photo contest dubbed “For Future Smile.” The website contains information about the causes, diagnosis, and treatments of cancer as well as a list of ways to donate to support Vietnamese children with cancer.

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*Fall 2009 SEAYLP / Cambodia participant Thearith Sreang, fourth from the left, recently helped his home village of Boeng Basak build its first library, assisted by community residents and Thearith’s fellow SEALYP participants Ban Sophorn Watey, Khin Chan Thearanita, Sophalgnean Chan, Dalin Hy, and Pisey Sreng.*
Southeast Asian studies meets science at NIU STEMfest

STEM major + SEA minor = Global Career Prospects. That’s the formula CSEAS graduate assistants Laura Iandola (history) and Maria “Rai” Hancock (history) pitched while staffing a CSEAS table at NIU’s first Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) festival Oct. 23 at the Convocation Center. STEMfest, a Division of Administration and University Outreach project, is an outgrowth of Spooky Science Saturday, a perennially popular Halloween event featuring the Haunted Physics Laboratory and other science demonstrations. These were folded into a new larger event designed to attract students of all ages and promote careers in STEM fields. To promote science and Southeast Asian studies at NIU, Iandola and Hancock created a brochure linking the need for science students proficient in a Southeast Asian language, study abroad experience, and cultural literacy. “STEM majors are needed in Southeast Asia to research and find solutions for: sustainable development, environmental degradation, global disease and hunger, population growth and migration, and economic competitiveness,” they pointed out in their brochure.

Spring 2010 / Indonesia

Team Aguila, as this group has dubbed itself, created a project to serve underprivileged children hanging out in the Bacolod City Public Plaza by offering free tutoring in reading, arithmetic, and other basic lessons in September 2010. Many of the youngsters spend much of their days at the plaza, not in school. The group has spent Sunday afternoons with the kids, and late last fall organized a holiday party in December to provide free sandals to the children, many of whom did not have shoes. The group has also conducted leadership training and given talks on community values at local schools.

Liz Denius is the CSEAS outreach media coordinator and Maria Hancock is a center graduate assistant.
Fellowship Notes

Graduates and undergraduates take up the FLAS challenge

Seventeen NIU students—fourteen graduate students and three undergraduates—are, for the first time in National Resource Center history, studying Southeast Asian languages this year as recipients of the center’s 2010–11 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships program, which is funded by a Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The disciplines represented in this year’s group range from anthropology, history, and political science to art, applied family and child studies, and nursing. Fellows for the 2011–12 academic year will be announced in late spring.

FLAS fellows 2010–11

Shahin Aftabizadeh (MA candidate, anthropology), Burmese
- Research focuses on the effects of globalization on migration from the state of Burma. His focus has been on the complex Burmese community on the Thai-Burma border.

Coral Carlson (PhD candidate, history), Malay
- Research focuses on cross-cultural and interdisciplinary exploration of pre-modern trade between Asia and Europe, focusing on ceramics (in particular Khmer ceramics) as an indicator of this trade and its routes.

Laura Iandola (PhD candidate, history), Indonesian
- Research focuses on Indonesia’s intentions to become a nuclear power during the Cold War as a deterrent to western intervention in the Southeast Asia region.

Matthew Jagel (PhD candidate, history), Khmer
- Research focuses on Cambodian nationalist leader Son Ngoc Thanh and relationship with the U.S. in the post-World War II years within the larger context of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia during this period.

Aaron Johnson (PhD candidate, political science), Thai
- Research interests include comparative political issues in Thailand and Cambodia.

Scott LaDeur (PhD candidate, political science), Thai
- Research focuses on influence of middle-power countries, such as Thailand, on U.S. foreign policy, and the success or failure of these states’ strategies in specific policy areas.

Siew Lian Lim (MFA candidate, art), Indonesian
- Research focuses on using images from wayang kulit shadow puppet shows of Indonesia and Malaysia in contemporary artworks.

Brett McCabe (MA candidate, anthropology), Malay
- Research focuses on Malay identity and Jawi script (Malay language written in Arabic script) in Malaysia. Has studied abroad in Indonesia and Malaysia while at NIU. Received a 2010 Florence Tan Moeson Fellowship to conduct research at the Library of Congress in summer 2010.

Shawn McCafferty (PhD candidate, political science), Thai
- Research focuses on comparative analysis of non-governmental organizations in the developing world, including Thailand.

Wendy Perzynski (MS candidate, applied family and child studies), Burmese
- Studies focus on effective training strategies of social workers and the provision of social services to refugee populations in the U.S., with an emphasis on Burmese refugees. Research at Karen and Rohingya refugees in Malaysia.

Daniel J. Pojar, Jr. (PhD candidate, political science), Thai
- Research focuses on the character and strength of civil society in Thailand in the context of the Red Shirt-Yellow Shirt social movements.

Mary Thomas (MA candidate, anthropology), Malay
- Research focuses on the ethnographic study of food security and urban agriculture in Malaysia, with comparisons to urban agriculture in the United States.

Sarah Wiley (MA candidate, history), Malay
- Research focuses on the intersection and interactions of British colonial and Malay hunting cultures in nineteenth-century Malaya.

Michael Zack (MA candidate, history), Burmese
- Research interests include oral histories of contemporary events in Burma.

Emily Dow (BA undergraduate, anthropology), Tagalog
- Goal is to become fluent in Tagalog in order to study Filipino culture from an anthropology perspective.

Chanta Sam (BS undergraduate, nursing), Khmer
- Discovered the opportunity to study Khmer while pursuing a nursing degree at NIU; is interested in serving as an interpreter for Cambodian-speaking patients and to helping others, particularly Cambodian-Americans, learn Khmer.

Robin Waters (BA undergraduate, political science), Indonesian
- Pursuing a career in international relations, with a special emphasis on Indonesia.

Tapped to teach

This year’s Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, seen here at the Aug. 25 CSEAS open house, are Nanda Octavia (Indonesian), Leizel Arsenal (Tagalog), and Jocelyn Sim (Malay). They have been teaching with foreign language faculty Patricia Henry, Rhodalyne Crail, and James T. Collins respectively this year.
Editor’s note: For a week in August last summer, anthropology MA candidate Brett McCabe toiled in the collections at the Library of Congress as a Florence Tan Moeson fellow. This article is adapted from his post-fellowship report. McCabe has since defended and submitted his master’s thesis, and has been accepted as a PhD candidate in history at NIU.

While at the Library of Congress last summer, I conducted research on the changing role of the Jawi script in Malaysia as a recipient of the 2010 Florence Tan Moeson Fellowship. My time in the Asian Division at the Library of Congress was and will be very helpful in my current and future research endeavors. For six days I had the rare opportunity to peruse the library’s Jawi script materials from the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, from Malaysian newspapers in the periodicals section to educational and academic writings in the rare books collection.

Jawi, based on Arabic script, is an orthography used for the Malay language. Although it is based on the Arabic writing system, there are six additional symbols to denote sounds in Malay that are not used in the Arabic language. Over its 700-year history, Jawi script has changed in various ways during numerous time periods. In the 1500s, Jawi script was used to write trading agreements, treatises and other official documents, and then spread to intellectual Islamic centers of learning to become the script of Malay intellectualism, seen in various versions of law codices and works of literature (hikayat), which led seventeenth-century Europeans to describe Malay, and presumably the Malay script, as the Latin of the Southeast Asian trading states.

During the British colonial era in what is now Malaysia, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jawi script was seen in nearly every newspaper and was the practical, everyday script used to disseminate information and innovation well into the 1960s. Since the late 1960s, however, Jawi script has all but disappeared as a writing system for information and innovation. My MA thesis is focused on describing the process of Jawi script’s change from a practical source of information to a principally symbolic use that pertains to Malay ethnic identity. The newspapers and periodicals in the Asian Division at the Library of Congress were very useful, particularly those from the 1950s to 1980s, because this period represents pre- and post-independent Malaysia [Malaya became independent in 1957; the Federation of Malaysia was declared in 1963].

Day by day in the stacks
The first day at the library I accessed materials that directly addressed the Jawi script and the vernacular press in Malaysia to establish a base when I started looking at the Malaysian periodicals for the following five days. I also examined materials in the rare books collection to find academic writing and educational books from the early 1900s.

Examining the rare books collection provided the opportunity to take pictures of various hikayats for later translation. These pictures and later translations will strengthen my analysis on early Malay literature and how Malay ethnic identity was perceived in specific hikayats. These hikayats will be useful when I examine early Malay literature and how it relates to Malay ethnic identity, which I plan to be part of the first chapter of my master’s thesis. Works such as Roff (1967), Lubis et al. (2006), Kim and Baharrudin (1980), and Tregonning (1962) [see references below] give a historical background of the vernacular press and how it has shaped Malaysian history and society. It is important to understand the external circumstances of the time period when searching through periodicals...
in Jawi script. These sources plus prior knowledge of Malaysian history allowed me to search periodicals by looking for key words, phrases, and sentences. My method was to read the title and parts of the article, in order to ascertain whether and if it will relate to my research.

From day two until day six I intensively studied Malaysian periodicals from the 1950s to the 1980s, including Malaya Merdeka (Independent Malaya), Utusan Melayu (The Malay News), Berita Harian (The Daily News), and Utusan Pelajar. Out of these periodicals I printed roughly 120 examples of articles and ads that I anticipate will be relevant to my research. Most of the periodicals I looked through were written in Jawi, so I had to skim the periodicals and look for key words, phrases and read a few sentences and predict what the rest of the article was about. Specifically, I carefully considered articles about primary schools, students, studying, and literacy because they will relate to my field research. While I did find articles discussing education I did not find articles specifically about the Jawi script, presumably they are there but I have not found them yet. I had anticipated relying more on Utusan Melayu, but so far I have found Malaya Merdeka to be very useful as it is the uncompromising voice of nationalism, and funded by UMNO, still Malaysia’s leading political party. Particularly in the 1950s, leading up to Malaysia’s independence in 1957, there are various motivational pieces on each page.

Concrete contributions

My goal during my time at the Library of Congress was to find sources that would help explain the process of the change in Jawi script, from a practical script to a symbol of Malay ethnic identity. What I was able to glean from Malaya Merdeka was an interesting overview of the gradual process whereby the Roman-script Malay replaced Jawi. Most noticeably in the 1960s Roman-script Malay would appear only sparingly in the newspaper. This is not to say this was not happening earlier on a smaller level, but it appears that it was in the 1960s that Malaya Merdeka began its shift to Roman-script Malay. Soon there was a mix of Roman-script Malay and Jawi, with a little bit of English in ads for businesses, corporations and various other companies. On page 4 in the January 31, 1968 edition, for example, the Malaya Merdeka published an article called “Imej Baru” (New Image) in which, under the advice of UMNO, they announced they would begin publishing the Merdeka in Roman-script Malay in order to, among various other things, accommodate the diverse groups in Malaysia. Interestingly, the newspaper chose to keep printing Jawi ads. In the midst of the new Roman-script Malaysian newspaper, there are ads in Jawi about drug companies, types of Chinese medicines, and a cure for children’s fever. So the Jawi ads seen in the 1968 Merdeka are a mirror image of what the paper was like just one year earlier. In the Malaya Merdeka, Roman-script Malay and the Jawi script became inverted after 1968, which reflects a major shift in its use.

This is not some sort of revelation, but rather an interesting process because there are a variety of social conditions and circumstances surrounding this. Just forty-two years later when the Jawi script is written about, it is usually in one of two ways: either pedagogical or in a sort of nostalgic, orientalist tone, as if it is an ancient relic of Malay history. Also it is said that a Malay must read Jawi; otherwise he or she will be unable to read the Quran (written in Arabic). Today’s weekly Utusan Melayu Jawi edition, for example, is constantly reprimanding Malay youth for not learning Jawi and therefore denying their history and heritage.

There are some exceptions, as noted in Lubis’ (et al.) Tulisan Jawi: Sehimpunan Kajian and James T. Collins’ 2004 research discussing Jawi as a symbol of Malay authority and dominance. Collins collected empirical data related to the use of Jawi in Kota Bharu, Kuala Terengganu, and Pahang. Following the same path Abdullah Munshi did more than 100 years earlier, Collins concluded that more surveys and fieldwork should be conducted to see how Jawi is being used and under what contexts.

Jawi’s history as a practical script to disseminate information and innovation in the everyday lives of the Malaysians has come to an end. However, Jawi script is still widely used in various contexts and will continue to evolve. My library research in the Asia Division will complement the fieldwork I have already conducted in Kelantan, Malaysia. I would like to thank the Florence Tan Moeson Fellowship committee for this unique opportunity.


New titles, new packaging, and new formats are leading the way with NIU Press’s Southeast Asian Studies series.

Since launching its collaboration with the center in 2009, the Press has released two titles in the series, Martha Ratliff’s *Meaningful Tone: A Study of Tonal Morphology in Compounds, Form Classes, and Expressive Phrases in White Hmong* and Eric Jones’s *Wives, Slaves, and Concubines: A History of the Female Underclass in Dutch Asia*. It has also repackaged the second edition of Clark Neher’s bestselling *Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World* with a bright new cover and John Okell’s successful Burmese language course with new covers and free downloadable audio replacing the older audiotapes and CDs.

“It’s been a good partnership so far,” said NIU Press Director Alex Schwartz. “We’ve got several new books coming out in the next eighteen months. We have a dictionary on Tagalog [*Tagalog Verb Dictionary* by center adjunct Michael Hawkins and center associate Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail] coming out in the spring. We’ve also got a project on political cartooning in Southeast Asia and another book looking at Islam in the Philippines during American military rule.”

Converting the Burmese language course's old-tech audio to Web-accessible MP3 files is just part of a larger effort by the Press to move all of its publications to new technology, Schwartz said. All new books in the Southeast Asia series will be available as e-books as well as traditional printed books, he said.

The Press is also using its marketing muscle to give a higher profile to Southeast Asia publications produced by NIU. In addition to tapping into a national sales force with University of Chicago Press, which markets all NIU Press books, Schwartz and his staff will host a book table at the spring Association of Asian Studies meeting in Hawaii.

For now, the future for the new Southeast Asia series looks bright. “It’s too early to tell,” Schwartz said, “but we think it will be successful.”
Outreach Update

Roger W. Smith Genocide and Human Rights Summer Institute 2010

In its fifth year, the Roger W. Smith Genocide and Human Rights Summer Institute at NIU offered K–16 educators the opportunity to study with some of the leading scholars and teachers in the field of genocide, human rights, and violence. Seventeen educators attended the June 14–17 program focused on Africa and Southeast Asia, funded in part by the center’s U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center grant and NIU’s Genocide and Human Rights Institute.

Professor Scott Straus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison opened the institute with the keynote address, “What Have We Learned about the Causes of Genocide since the Early 1990s?” Institute director J. D. Bowers (history, NIU) led off the presentations with a discussion of genocide in the twenty-first century. Other topics and speakers were: the Cambodian genocide (Judy Ledgerwood, anthropology, NIU); the Holocaust and genocide studies (Brett Weiss, teacher, Bartlett High School); the Germans and the Herero of Namibia, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Congo (Bowers); Darfur and the Sudan (Ismael Montana, history, NIU). Bowers and Lamb also gave a presentation on teaching genocide in the modern classroom.

Third International Ramayana Conference 2010

CSEAS, in cooperation with the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (CSAMES) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the International Ramayana Institute of North America (IRINA), organized a two-day conference on the Asian epic, the Ramayana. More than sixty participants, with thirty speakers from around the world, attended the Sept. 18–19 event, funded in part by the center’s U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center grant.

The theme of the conference was “Educational and Cultural Enhancement,” which was highlighted Saturday evening with a banquet and cultural performances by regional South and Southeast Asian performance troupes: the Indonesian Performing Arts Chicago (IPAC), the Mudra Dance Academy, Thai Cultural and Fine Arts Institute, and the Anila Sinha Foundation. The conference closed Sunday with an educators’ workshop featuring I Ketut Gede Asnawa, visiting professor of musicology/gamelan at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, performing “The Abduction of Sita,” a scene from the Balinese Ramayana dance drama.

The IMSA connection: CSEAS reaches out to Illinois Math and Science Academy

In April 2010, CSEAS Director James T. Collins and Laura Iandola, center graduate assistant and PhD candidate in history, met with the principal and faculty members of the Illinois Math and Science Academy (IMSA) to discuss center outreach programs that would interest the faculty and students of the innovative secondary school located just outside Chicago. Since then, the connection has solidified with several outreach programs.

On Nov. 5, students participating in the center’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) spent the day at IMSA. In the morning they took part in a history lecture and discussion, followed by lunch with IMSA students. After lunch, SEAYLP students participated in science classes and experiments, before leaving to do water testing at the nearby Fox River. Several students from Vietnam told the
center they were so impressed by the educational experience at IMSA that they hoped to involve themselves in educational reforms within Vietnam.

On Feb. 28, the center launched a three-part lecture series on post-war Southeast Asia for more than 200 IMSA juniors taking World Cultures. Collins delivered the first lecture on the emergence of a strong anti-colonial force in Indonesia in the 1930s and the Dutch attempts to suppress the movement, the impact of the Japanese occupation, the post-war interests of U.S. foreign policy, and the triumph of the Indonesian Revolution. Two other lectures are planned for later this spring.

Also this spring, SEAYLP participants will spend April 15 “shadowing” IMSA students in science, math, and computer science classes. (Each Southeast Asian student will be assigned an IMSA student with whom they will spend the day and attend classes.) On April 18, IMSA students have been invited to attend a Kane County Cougars baseball game with SEAYLP participants (as well as with students from Sycamore High School).

**Sycamore High takes an ‘in-school field trip’ to Southeast Asia**

On Jan. 6, CSEAS Outreach Coordinator Julia Lamb and center graduate assistant Laura Iandola presented “A Day in the Life of a Southeast Asian Teenager,” a two-hour multimedia program, to more than three hundred Sycamore High School freshmen studying Southeast Asia as part of their World Cultures class. Enlisting the input, photos, and texts from past participants of the center’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program, the Sycamore High School program gave students a vivid sense of day-to-day life for teens all over Southeast Asia, from school to music and family holidays. It also introduced them to more serious subjects such as the destruction of Cambodian rock music and musicians during the Cambodian genocide and the impact of illegal logging on Indonesian villages. Julia Lamb opened the event by giving students a look at the center’s resources and programs, which were highlighted on a nearby display table.
This past fall, student workers at NIU’s Anthropology Museum moved the more than 12,000 ethnographic and archeological specimens, artifacts, and objects in its collection from permanent storage in the basement of Cole Hall to temporary storage in the museum’s now-closed exhibition space in Stevens Hall. When construction on Cole Hall is complete, currently scheduled for fall, the collection, half of which is from Southeast Asian cultures, will be moved back to its permanent storage space where it can be easily accessed for display in the museum’s new home on Cole’s main floor.

After working over the summer on the university’s planning committee for the multimillion-dollar Cole Hall renovation, retiring museum director and center associate Ann Wright-Parsons (see Kudos, page 12) turned her attention to preparing grants for the new museum space in the fall. Sara Pfannkuche of Beloit College’s Logan Museum of Anthropology was hired in September to help coordinate the move with the aid of three teaching assistants, fourteen work-study students, and one volunteer. Pfannkuche, whose area of study is North American archeology, is working on her dissertation at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

In order to meet the Oct. 15 move deadline, the anthropology department hired an additional three work-study students and four outside experts to help pack the museum’s collections. Many anthropology department faculty members and graduate students also assisted in the monumental project, Pfannkuche said, spending a Saturday transporting oversized objects out of Cole (under “careful supervision,” she added). With yet more help from NIU carpenters, movers, building services, anthropology department office staff, and various faculty members from across campus, the last pieces in the museum’s collection were officially moved out of Cole Hall by 3:40 p.m. Oct. 15, an hour and twenty minutes before the deadline.

Since the move, students are still working in the temporary storage space in Stevens Hall, unpacking items and beginning the job of creating a complete inventory. Pfannkuche has agreed to stay on as interim director until the anthropology department hires a permanent director, possibly this spring. Assisted by graduate assistant Karly Guldah and senior work-study student Ariel Begley, she will continue work on the inventory process, updating the museum’s database, and making preparations for a new director, she said. Wright-Parsons, is continuing to work on writing new grants for the museum.

Renovation of Cole Hall, including construction of the museum’s new location, began in mid-January. It is scheduled to be completed in the fall.
What's Coming Up

Study abroad this summer

NIU students have the opportunity to spend a few weeks this summer in Malaysia / Brunei or Thailand with two center faculty associates each leading a separate study abroad programs. Historian Eric Jones reprises his annual three-week trip to Malaysia and Brunei to study the history and culture of those two countries from May 15 to June 3. Anthropologist Andrea Molnar will explore cultural diversity in Thailand, focusing on the relationship between the dominant majority and minority groups, from May 30 to June 25. Both programs are open to graduate and undergraduate students; some financial aid is available. For details on these programs, see page 15.

2011 Southeast Asia Club
Spring Student Conference

University of Chicago historian Mark Bradley will be the keynote speaker at the Southeast Asia Club’s student academic conference on April 23 in Altgeld Hall. The theme of the conference, which is open to graduate and undergraduate students, is “Resistance Movements and Democratization in Southeast Asia.” Bradley, a specialist in postcolonial Southeast Asia, is the author of Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam (University of North Carolina Press, 2000), which won the prestigious Harry J. Benda Prize from the Association for Asian Studies. The conference begins at 9 a.m., with the keynote speech scheduled to lead off the afternoon session. Students submitting papers for the conference (due March 23) will give 15-minute presentations in the morning and afternoon sessions. A cash prize will be awarded to the best undergraduate and graduate papers. The conference is open to all students (at NIU and elsewhere), faculty, staff, and interested community members. Admission is free.

Be a host family - SEAYLP and PYLP opportunities

A new semester means another chance for area households to open their homes to young people and their adult leaders from all over Southeast Asia who are coming to NIU to participate in this spring’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP), led by CSEAS Director Jim Collins, and the Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP), directed by center associates Susan Russell (anthropology) and Lina Davide-Ong (International Training Office). The SEAYLP group will include participants from Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand; they will arrive on campus April 6. Home-stay dates are April 10–22. PYLP participants, who come from the Mindanao province of the Philippines, arrive April 16; home-stay dates are May 1–14. For home-stay details, contact Leslie Shive at the International Training Office at 815-753-9546 (e-mail lshive@niu.edu).
Center for Southeast Asian Studies Council 2010–11

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Judy Ledgerwood
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SEAYLP one year later: Photo courtesy of SEAYLP / Philippines

Director’s Chair: CSEAS photo

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