Building leaders, changing lives
16 years of SEA youth leadership programs at CSEAS
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Director's Chair
New grant propels new projects for CSEAS and NIU in the region
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Faculty 360°
Teaching, researching, connecting on campus and across the sea
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Postcards from Burma
Documenting the visual milieu of a colonial world
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A son's story
A FLAS Fellow’s journey to renew family ties in Laos
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Postcard image, “Burmese Man and Girl,” taken by itinerant 19th-century photographer Philippe Adolphe Klier and later reproduced and sold in postcard format without permission by photographer D. A. Ahuja in the early 20th century.
It is hard to believe another whirlwind year is behind us, but it has been an exciting one with lots of opportunity leading the way as a national resource in the study of Southeast Asia. Speaking of the auspicious elephant in the room, we began the year last fall with our status as a U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center/FLAS institution renewed for another four years. Our Title VI NRC-FLAS submission: Teach Southeast Asia was awarded $1,080,000 in NRC funding and $1,404,000 in FLAS funding. NIU also locked arms with other Illinois Title VI centers—in coordination with a larger national effort—in March to lobby Congress successfully for renewal of the Higher Education Act.

Grant evaluators gave our NRC proposal high marks, an average of 162 out of 175 points (93%), with FLAS scores averaging 138 out of 145 points (95%). Their comments were equally positive. “The list of projects is impressive and many seem to be breaking new ground in Southeast Asian Studies,” wrote one evaluator. “The impact of the proposed teacher education initiative stands out as a potential game-changer in terms of improving the points of connection between areas studies, language instruction, in-country service/internships and study abroad, and the effect on K-16 curriculum beyond the locale,” wrote another. “This model could be duplicated at other centers, and with appropriate evaluation, should prove a model for engagement with teacher candidates.”

One grant innovation to highlight is our new partnership with the College of Education, especially their Educate Global program. This past summer College of Ed Dean Laurie Elish-Piper and Educate Global Director Terry Borg traveled through Southeast Asia seeking engagement opportunities. As a result, a cohort of College of Education Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) students will do their student teaching in West Sumatran schools next summer. We hope to broaden this initiative to other countries in the region in the future.

This project is part of our ongoing effort to increase connections with our partners across Southeast Asia and to support colleagues interested in the same. Elish-Piper, Borg and I joined NIU President Lisa Freeman, Vice-President for Research Jerry Blazey, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Dean Judy Ledgerwood and CSEAS associates Catherine Raymond, Scot Schraufnagel, Tharaphi Than and Kheang Un in visiting countries across the region in June and July, observing firsthand the impact of our faculty, staff and alumni (see page 3). As a result, we reinforced existing linkages and pioneered new ones in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Indonesia. On campus during the past year we welcomed delegations and representatives from Hasanuddin University (Indonesia), Thammasat University (Thailand), Bukidnon State University (Philippines), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia Foundation, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Center for Khmer Studies among others. Over 2018–19 we also continued our momentum administering U.S. Department of State youth leadership programs. With a successful carry-forward grant for the Southeast Asian Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP), which we have hosted since fall 2009, we welcomed 50 high school students and 10 adult leaders from 10 Southeast Asian nations in April to engage in learning activities on the thematic topics of Access and Equity, Green Technology and Economic Growth, and...
Securing ASEAN’s Future. In addition, we won a U.S. Department of State US-ASEAN Grant to design and implement an upcoming two-day conference in Jakarta in November for past SEAYLP participants to discuss current U.S.-ASEAN relationships. It is with great pride that we celebrate 2014 SEAYLP participant I Younan An (BA political science, 2018), who returned to NIU in 2015 as a SEAYLP Scholar and was named the 2018 Lincoln Laureate, the outstanding senior at NIU in November.

The Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP), which brings high school students and adult leaders from the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, has been run for 15 years at the International Training Office (ITO). With the blessing of retiring Principal Investigators and CSEAS associates Sue Russell (Anthropology) and Lina Ong (ITO), we successfully applied for PYLP to continue at NIU at CSEAS under the direction of CSEAS associate and Tagalog instructor Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail and 2019 administrative director Karla Findley. In April we welcomed 24 leaders and four adult educators for PYLP Year 16: Engaging Young Advocates in Environmental Preservation and Peacebuilding, giving them exposure to and training in civic education, leadership, diversity, community engagement, and preparation to conduct community projects at home. Earlier in the year, I had met some former PYLP student and adult participants at the 15-year PYLP reunion in the Philippines. This gathering of impressive PYLP alums helped bridge Sue and Lina’s previous years of work and service with our new program.

I could not end this column without thanking the CSEAS staff and all of our faculty associates, graduate assistants, student workers, Extra Help staff, Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, lecture series cook Gantina Setiawati, and more than 25 guest lecturers for another meaningful year of Southeast Asian studies here at NIU. We look forward to doing it all again in 2019–20!

Connecting past and future in SEA

Adapted from NIU Today

When it comes to establishing and maintaining relationships across borders and oceans, there is no substitute for being there—shaking hands, breaking bread and celebrating shared values among different cultures. An NIU delegation that included NIU President Lisa Freeman did just that this summer on a fast-paced visit to Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Indonesia.

Over nearly three weeks in June and July, Freeman and an NIU delegation met with nearly 100 Huskie alumni, rekindled friendships with past participants of the university’s U.S. Department of State-funded youth programs, strengthened relationships with partner institutions, launched research initiatives and established a new collaboration with a top university in Thailand.

“This trip demonstrated our deep commitment to Southeast Asia,” Freeman said. “It was incredibly productive as well,” she added. “We nurtured new and existing relationships that support student academic success, leadership development and research excellence.”

As the home of CSEAS, one of six federally funded National Resource Centers for Southeast Asian Studies in the U.S., NIU has built an international reputation for scholarship and engagement in the region. The university frequently hosts the region’s educational leaders and dignitaries. Scores of students from Southeast Asia study at NIU, and in turn, NIU regularly sends students abroad for research and language immersion. More than a dozen NIU students traveled to Southeast Asia this past summer on Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships.

Additionally, NIU’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) brings 50 high school students from the region to DeKalb each year to learn about cultural appreciation and community action. While in Laos, the delegation presented Vilaya Sirivong (SEAYLP Laos-2017) with the SEA Fellowship, a competitive NIU tuition-waiver scholarship awarded to past youth leadership program participants.

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“Visits like this one are important because this is a region of the world where face-to-face relationships matter,” said Eric Jones, acting director of CSEAS. “We know the languages, we know the cultures, and we have many dear friends, alumni and students in these countries,” Jones added. “When our NIU president leads a high-level delegation to the region, people pay attention. It opens doors and facilitates our relationships.”

While meeting with prominent alumni in all four countries, the delegation made strides toward establishing a formalized Southeast Asia alumni network. In Indonesia, the NIU group announced Nicolaus Harjanto as the Distinguished Alumni Award recipient from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Harjanto, who will receive the award during a visit to campus in October, earned his Ph.D. in political science from NIU in 2010 and now plays a leading role in shaping Indonesian national policy.

CSEAS associate Catherine Raymond (Art History), a delegation member and director of NIU’s Center for Burma Studies (CBS), spent extended time in Thailand and Myanmar, and was joined by CBS research assistant Carmin Berchiolly (MA art history, 2017), Associate Art History Professor Helen Nagata and recent graduate Amanda Spradling (MA art history, 2018). Raymond and Berchiolly presented findings from their research into the art of Southeast Asian reverse glass painting, and Spradling presented her research on Bodhi-leaf iconography. Raymond and Nagata also launched a new research project on Burmese silk production in collaboration with Mandalay and Yadanaibon universities. Silk has been an important aspect of Burmese identity for centuries.

The NIU delegation also renewed existing agreements with a number of SEA universities and established a new memorandum of understanding with Thammasat University in Bangkok.

“Thammasat University is a premier institution in Thailand,” said delegation member Judy Ledgerwood, acting dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. “This agreement establishes a dual-degree program in economics, political science and non-profit and NGO Studies and will pave the way for more Thai undergraduates to come to NIU.”

Laurie Elish-Piper, dean of the NIU College of Education, and Terry Borg, director of the college’s Office of External and Global Programs, joined the delegation to make connections for Educate Global. Educate Global partners with schools from around the world to provide NIU teacher-licensure students with hands-on experiences with different cultures, international colleagues and a support system for teaching. NIU is planning to implement Educate Global in West Sumatra, Indonesia, during the summer of 2020.

“Terry and I went to Padang, in West Sumatra, where we met with the governor, the head of education, English teachers and high school students to discuss education and to get a better sense of the needs and opportunities,” Elish-Piper said, adding that they are also exploring opportunities in Laos. “Everyone we met in Laos is looking for strong partners,” Elish-Piper said. “They really see us as potential collaborators.”

Other members of the NIU delegation included Jerry Blazey, vice president for Research and Innovation Partnerships; Scot Schraufnagel, chair of the Department of Political Science; and associate political science professor Kheang Un.
Rahmi Aoyama (World Languages and Cultures)
- Is piloting her first distance Indonesian class this fall for CSEAS
- Attended the Association for Asian Studies meeting in March to meet with the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL) and the Consortium for the Teaching of Indonesian (COTI)

Kenton Clymer (History)
- Has been in China over spring and summer, teaching short courses on the United States and Asia at three universities: South West University in Chongqing in April and Xiamen University in Xiamen and Renmin University in Beijing in June and July
- Attended a meeting of scholars in early August to discuss research approaches to the study of the U.S. and Asia

Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail (World Languages and Cultures)
- Presented “Rebuilding the Community Spirit in the Language Learning Classroom One Partner and One Group at a Time” at the Oct. 26–27 Illinois Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Naperville, IL

Aarie Glas (Political Science)
- Presented at several conferences during the year including the American Political Science Association annual meeting in Boston and a memorial conference dedicated to his late mentor, University of Toronto Professor Lee Ann Fujii, in Toronto. Later published short research note on Fujii’s contribution to qualitative research methods with Jessica Soedirgo (University of Toronto) in the 2018 issue of Qualitative and Multi-Methods Research
- Published two research articles examining diplomatic practice at the African Union in the 2018 issue of International Affairs
- Co-authored a study of the international practice of multilateral treaty-making in the 2018 issue of Journal of Global Security Studies

Two in a row
CSEAS Assistant Director and Associate Music Professor Jui-Ching Wang celebrates her 2018 International Educator of the Year award with 2017 winner CSEAS Acting Director Eric Jones at the Division of International Affairs’ International Recognition Awards in November.

- Presented a paper examining ASEAN’s diplomatic practices at the AAS-in-Asia conference July 1–4 in Bangkok and the International Studies Association Asia-Pacific conference July 4-6 at Nanyan Technological University in Singapore
- Visited universities in Southeast Asia over the summer to support CSEAS and Department of Political Science linkages in the region
- With CSEAS Director Eric Jones organized a visit by an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) group of regional officials Oct. 2 through the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program
- Organized two events at NIU with the Qualitative Inquiry Collaborative, including the first Methods Café and second annual Graduate Research Conference
- Led a seminar about the structure of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the spring 2019 session of the U.S. Department of State’s Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program at NIU

Kikue Hamayotsu (Political Science)
- Published “The Political Origins of Islamic Courts in Divided Societies: The Case of Malaysia” in the 2018 issue of The Journal of Law and Religion
- Presented “Regulating Islam: States, Organized Religion and Democracy in Southeast Asia” at the May 9–11 Understanding Political and Social Change in Muslim States and Societies workshop at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI
- Was invited to contribute “Indonesia Society and Islam: Identity Politics and the Making of a Majority” to the May Asia Dialogue, the University of Nottingham Asia Research Institute’s online magazine
- Took part in the Southeast Asian Research Group 2019 North America meeting May 2–4 at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver
- Presented “Making the Majority in the Name of Islam: Democratization, Moderate-Radical Coalition and Religious Intolerance in Indonesia” at the April 10–12 State of Religious Pluralism in Indonesia workshop at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY
- Chaired and served as discussant on the panel “Malaysia’s Democratic Spring? Authoritarian Elections, Ethnicity, and Gender in Comparative Perspective” at the Association for Asian Studies meeting in March in Denver. She was also the 2019–22 secretary for the Association for Asian Studies Indonesia Timor Leste Studies Council executive committee Association for Asian Studies meeting in March

Eric Jones (History/CSEAS)
- Hosted 11 Crossroads Southeast Asia podcasts for CSEAS

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• Traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to promote Title VI programs on Capitol Hill and to meet with the Center’s program officers at the U.S. departments of Education and State
• Attended the Association for Asian Studies meeting in March in Denver

Melissa Lenczewski (Geology and Environmental Geosciences)
• Presented “Environmental and Water Issues in Cambodia and Myanmar” March 1 at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
• Published “Water Quality and Physical Hydrogeology of the Amarapura Township, Mandalay, Myanmar” with former FLAS fellow Michael Grzybowski and Yee Yee Oo in Hydrogeology Journal

Doris Macdonald (English)
• Traveled to East Kalimantan, Indonesia as a visiting Fulbright Specialist (see In the Field)

Andrea Molnar (Anthropology)
• Officially retired from NIU in May (see Transitions)

Hao Phan (NIU Libraries)
• Published Radio Mua He [Summer Radio], a collection of poetry in Vietnamese, with afterword in English by Hai-Dang Phan of Grinnell College (Nhan Anh Publisher, California, 2019).
• Attended the Association for Asian Studies meeting in March in Denver to meet with the Southeast Asia librarians group, discuss ongoing work with the Southeast Asia Digital Library to present a brief paper on the underground publishing industry in Vietnam

Alan Potkin (CSEAS Adjunct)
• Presented “High-Tech Alternatives for the Repair/Restoration/Replication of Damaged, Destroyed or Disappeared Reverse Glass Paintings” at the SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference on Southeast Asian Archaeology June 17–20 in Bangkok
• Presented “Religious Conflicts over Hydropower Development and Waterfalls Aesthetics in South and Southeast Asia” at the South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion Conference June 13–16 in Dhaka, Bangladesh
• Continued fieldwork over the summer on water politics and river ecology on Thai and Myanmar sides of the Salween/Thanlwin River
• Exhibited his use of digital media to recreate demolished Lao Ramayana murals at the Vat Oub Mong temple in Vientiane, Laos at the Digital Heritage conference June 2018 conference Oct. 26-30 in San Francisco. Center for Burma Studies (CBS) Director Catherine Raymond collaborated on the project, which involved CSEAS, CBS and the Digital Conservation Laboratory in Laos

Catherine Raymond (School of Art, Center for Burma Studies)
• Launched a three-year project, “Traditional Burmese Silk,” over the summer in collaboration with University of Mandalay and Yadanabon University, an interdisciplinary project involving the students and faculty in the departments of Archaeology, History, Anthropology, Environmental Studies and International Relations. The project goal is offer a new view on an important iconic tradition in Burma and will conclude with a symposium and an exhibition at Mandalay, Yadanabon and NIU
• Organized a panel and presented on reverse glass paintings in Southeast Asia at the SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference on Southeast Asian Archaeology conference June 17–20 in Bangkok. Also presenting was Center for Burma Studies research assistant Carmin Berchilloy (MA art history, 2018) and 2019 graduate Markie Striegel (MA art history)
• Convened and participated in the panel “Between East and West: The Asian Reverse Glass Painting Traditions” at the July 16–19 International Consortium of Asian Scholars (ICAS) conference in Leiden, The Netherlands
• Taught Introduction to Museum Studies, a four-week intersession course using the Burma Art Collection and Southeast Asian resources on campus, from mid-May to early June
• Attended the Dec. 6–7 conference Mythes d’origine dans les Civilisations de l’Asie, organized by the Societe Asiatique with Institut des Langues et Civilisations Orientales and the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, in Paris

Scot Schraufnagel (Political Science)
• Spent a month in Thailand over the summer to meet with universities and teach. Met with Thammasat University to finalize a 2+2 agreement between Thammasat’s College of Interdisciplinary Studies and NIU’s School of Public and Global Affairs (signed at NIU July 16). Renewed broad memorandum of understanding between Thammasat and NIU.
• Served as a faculty associate at Mahidol University working with Ph.D. students there on best practices for dissertation writing and publishing strategies. Also met with university officials to discuss potential memorandum of understanding
• Finalized an agreement (signed June 25) for a 1+1 dual M.A. degree joint program with Chiang Mai University (Thailand).
• Met with Political Science faculties at Thammasat and Chiang Mai
After twenty-three and a half years of dedicated scholarship to Southeast Asian studies at NIU, Anthropology Professor Andrea Katalin Molnar retired at the end of spring semester. A cultural anthropologist and area specialist in Indonesia, southern Thailand and Timor-Leste, Molnar received her Ph.D. from Australian National University in 1995. Joining CSEAS as a faculty associate when she came to NIU in 1996, Molnar taught political anthropology; peace and conflict anthropology; religion, myth and ritual; Southeast Asian religions and cosmologies; Islam and Muslim cultures, among numerous other Southeast Asian studies courses at NIU. Her areas of expertise included political anthropology, social organization, peace and conflict studies, language and culture, and nation-building processes and cultural change.

Named a Presidential Engagement Professor in 2013, Molnar supervised master’s theses for more than 20 students and served on committees for roughly the same number, including several outside NIU. She was active in numerous university committees, led study abroad programs to Thailand, facilitated Memoranda of Understanding with a number of universities in SEA, and widely published and presented in her field throughout her career. She served on the board for Association for Asian Studies’ Indonesian Studies Committee, for two years as a chair. She also served as peace and conflict studies consultant for the United Nations Development Programme in Thailand in 2013 and was executive editor (Southeast Asia) for Asian Affairs: An American Review from 2010 to 2015. Up until her retirement, Molnar was most recently engaged in Thailand, where she has ties with NIU alumni and academic institutions, in particular with Prince of Songkla University-Pattani in southern Thailand. There she worked closely with alumnus Srisomphob Jitpiromsri (PhD political science, 1997), director of the Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity, and conducted training workshops, offered expert advice on research protocols and other administrative matters, and deepened her expertise in peace and conflict studies.

Born in Hungary near Budapest, Molnar immigrated to Canada when she was 14, a year after her family left Eastern Europe. Fluent in German, Hungarian and Russian, she quickly picked up English as her fourth language. She began her university career at the University of Alberta studying biology and chemistry in preparation for a medical degree, but soon after entering medical school turned her eyes on anthropology. Perhaps inspired, she says, by a family trip to the 1986 Vancouver World Expo where they visited the Thailand and Indonesia pavilions, Molnar focused on Southeast Asia as an anthropology student. Honing her linguistic skills, she picked up Indonesian, Malay and six of seven indigenous languages and conducted her dissertation research in a remote village on the eastern Indonesian island of Flores (surviving a 1992 earthquake there during the process, she wryly notes).

While teaching at NIU, Molnar returned to eastern Indonesia in 1999, this time as an elections observer for The Carter Center in the newly independent Timor-Leste. “It was a dangerous assignment,” she says of her time in the still-conflicted region. Her anthropology background was helpful, she said, “because you can talk to people at all levels of society.” As CSEAS’s primary Timor-Leste specialist, Molnar designed an online introductory course, “East Timor: An Introduction to the History, Politics and Culture of Southeast Asia’s Youngest Nation,” on CSEAS’s online resource, SEAsite, in 2005, and continued to publish and present on the country as recently as 2015.

Now that she is retired, Molnar says she is exploring her options, but for now she is “professionally taking a sabbatical for the next few years,” dividing her time between the U.S. and Asia, where she has friends across SEA and Australia. CSEAS wishes her all the best for the future.
Splendor in the glass

During the cold gray month of November 2018, the Center for Burma Studies (CBS) opened its vibrant exhibition, “Vanishing Art from Myanmar: Buddhist Reverse Glass Painting Traditions,” Nov. 15 at the NIU Art Museum, a sparkling lead-off event for the Center for Burma Studies’ one-day international symposium on Asian reverse glass painting traditions Nov. 16. The symposium was the culmination of several years of field research by CBS Director Catherine Raymond, who in addition to organizing the symposium, was among the presenters discussing this artistic tradition from Myanmar, China, Indonesia and Cambodia. The symposium opened with remarks by U Aung Lynn, the Burmese ambassador to the U.S., Jerry Blazey, vice president of the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships, and Paul Kassell, dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and John Siblik, director of the School of Art and Design. Also speaking was Jerome Samuel, vice president of the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales of Paris. The exhibit was on display through Feb. 15.

Kassell, dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and John Siblik, director of the School of Art and Design. Also speaking was Jerome Samuel, vice president of the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales of Paris. The exhibit was on display through Feb. 15.

Kurt Thurmaier (Public Administration)
• Was named a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, one of 12 Illinois Fellows from Illinois out of 850 fellows nationwide

Kheang Un (Political Science)
• Published Cambodia: Return to Authoritarianism in February (Cambridge University Press, 2019)
• Gave a book talk, “Cambodia: Return to Authoritarianism,” May 3 at The Asia Foundation in Washington D.C.

Tharaphi Than (World Languages and Cultures)
• Is on sabbatical in fall 2019
• Co-authored the online article, “Myanmar Debates Women’s Rights Amid Evidence of Pervasive Sexual and Domestic Violence,” with Stephanie Miedema (Emory University) and posted on The Conversation website.
• Served as a discussant on the panel “It Can Happen Here: Censorship, Press Freedom and Media Development in Southeast Asia” in March at the Association for Asian Studies meeting in Denver
• Led a workshop on feminism in Myanmar in December with Rainfall, a local feminist group
• Presented “Streets and Trains as a Classroom” and participated on a panel rethinking area studies at the International Conference Africa-Asia Sept. 20-22 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Kanjana Thepboriruk (World Languages and Cultures)
• Presented “Mothering the Thai Nation: Phibun’s Ideal Woman from an International Fascist Perspective” and represented NIU and Thai language study at the Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages meeting in March at the Association for Asian Studies meeting in Denver
• Traveled to Los Angeles in June to conduct additional research for Thai in Diaspora linguistic project comparing the experiences and languages of Thais in the Los Angeles diaspora and in Thailand. The project, a continuation/expansion of her dissertation research, is partially funded by a 2018-19 Research Priority Grant from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language
• Attended the spring Council of Teachers of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL) business meeting where the Council on the Advancement of Thai Instruction (CATI) drafting bylaws and elected officers
• Published “Dear Thai Sisters: Propaganda, Fashion, and the Corporeal Nation under Phibunsongkhram” in Vol. 8, No. 2 of Southeast Asian Studies, the bilingual quarterly of Kyoto University’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies

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By Doris Macdonald

Little did I know as I walked with NIU guests Ibu Dyah and Pak Sunardi to a reception on campus that one day they would be welcoming me to Mulawarman University (UNMUL) in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. But in February 2019, I arrived as a visiting Fulbright Specialist to a warm welcome from the faculty and students in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) at UNMUL.

I was inspired by a quote from a legendary Indonesian teacher, Ki Hadjar Dewantara, who exhorted teachers to set an example, raise students’ spirits, and encourage learning. While I was busy with planning and delivering lectures and workshops, I also had engaging spontaneous conversations and attended many events where I began to enrich my understanding of differences and commonalities in our institutional cultures and academic expectations. Though my time there was short, I was honored to meet many talented graduate and undergraduate students, high school teachers, and UNMUL faculty whose energy and openness to creative pedagogy not only impressed, but captivated me in exciting ways. Imagine 100 undergraduates reciting, in rounds, lines from the classic English pronunciation poem “The Chaos”; graduate students eagerly completing a communicative language task, then rigorously interrogating the cultural assumptions of the task and its content; or high school English teachers taking their free Saturday to discuss how to keep their students interested in studying English.

Students and colleagues also took me in hand as ad hoc tour guides. We visited the historic capital city of Tenggarong with its museums and refreshing riverfront. I was invited to several weddings where I experienced firsthand the incredible cultural and linguistic diversity of East Kalimantan. Shopping adventures included a trip to CitraNiaga Market and a traditional weaver’s shop. Together we explored the elaborate tiled and marbled Islamic Center and Mosque as well as the painted, wood-framed original Shirathal Mustaqiem Mosque, and enjoyed an afternoon of traditional dance in a Dayak village.

Samarinda is not a typical tourist destination compared to many Indonesian cities. Its streets are less congested, its pace is more relaxed, and its inhabitants genuinely interested in the lives and well-being of visitors. My colleagues were particularly concerned that I get to try as many different foods as possible, so I often arrived at the office to find some new and delicious fruit or sweet or savory rice dish.

As is always the case, there was too much in five weeks to fit into this short space, but I’m left with this Samarinda idiom that I hope resonates in truth: “Whoever visits Samarinda and drinks the water of the Mahakam River will return.” Salam dan terima kasih banyak untuk semua temanku di Samarinda.

CSEAS associate Doris Macdonald (English) is associate professor of applied linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. This was her third academic visit to Indonesia. An Indonesian language student herself, she has regularly served as a mentor for Peningkatan Kualitas Publikasi Internasional (PKPI), an Indonesian government program to bring doctoral students from the country to NIU.
• Contributed the chapter “Quality Peace in Cambodia: 20 Years after the Paris Peace Agreement” in Understanding Quality Peace: Peace Building after Civil War, eds. Madhav Y oshi and Peter Wallenten (New York: Routledge, 2018)

Jui-Ching Wang (School of Music/CSEAS)
• Received a $9,500 Research and Artistry grant from NIU’s Division of Research and Innovative Partnersips to return to Indonesia over the summer to continue her research on children’s singing games in Yogyakarta. Conducted large-scale survey on how elementary schools and communities to continue to teach this tradition and presented “I Sing, Therefore I Am: Temblang Dolanan Anak and its Historical, Local and Global Contexts,” at the July 11–17 International Council for Traditional Music World Conference in Thailand

Shei-Chau Wang (School of Art)
• Curated ArtFourJogja, a group exhibition of four contemporary artists from Taiwan (including Wang) with Deskabayu from Indonesia, on display June 22–July 7 at Sangkring Art Space in Yogyakarta
• Presented “Making the Invisible Seen: A Case Study on Promoting Art through an Interdisciplinary Approach” at the International Society of Education in Arts (InSEA)-Asia Regional Congress Dec. 8 in Hong Kong

Jim Wilson (Geographic and Atmospheric Sciences)
• Received the Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy Award for his work as chair of NIU’s Resources, Space, and Budget Committee
• Presented “Open Source GIS Instruction in Two Classroom Settings,” a poster about workshops he conducted on health/medical geography in Myanmar in 2017 and 2018, at the April 3–7 American Association of Geographers annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

Summer 2018 FLAS Fellow Autumn Smith (BS geography, 2019) contributed a section on Thailand

Won joins CSEAS as SEAS 225 teaching assistant

CSEAS welcomes Eunji Won (PhD candidate, political science) to Pottenger House as the 2019–20 teaching assistant for the Center’s Southeast Asia survey course, SEAS 225. Won began the MA/PhD program in 2013. Her first field is comparative politics and her research interests are democracy, authoritarian regimes and political economy in the region, in particular in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

Won has studied both Indonesian and Thai languages and conducted field research in the region. She has previously served as teaching assistant for POLS 371 (Politics in Southeast Asia), POLS 376 (Political Violence), and POLS 377 (Revolt, Revolution and Genocide). She published “Changes of the State-Capital Relationship in Thailand: Focusing on the Relationship between the State Macroeconomic Institutions and Commercial Banks” in Rian Thai, International Journal of Thai Studies, Vol. 7, in 2014. Most recently, she presented “Mechanism of Durability of Authoritarian Regime Operated in Strong State: Fungibility of State Capacity and Its Impact on Regime Viability” April 5 at the Midwest Political Science Association annual conference in Chicago.

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Fellowship Notes

FLAS: A year of living linguistically

The U.S. Department of Education Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) academic-year and summer fellowships continue to draw students to CSEAS’s minor and graduate certificate programs in Southeast Asian Studies. Over the summer, CSEAS sent 16 undergraduate and graduate students to Southeast Asia for immersion language and culture training at in-country language schools.

Studying a language in country offers not only enriched language opportunities, but personal development as well. “I have learned so much from being here and I’m very grateful for the opportunity. Living in Chiang Mai has given me more knowledge and experience than a textbook could ever give me,” said undergraduate Jasmine Meunekithirath, who studied at the Language Institute at Chiang Mai University. “I will continue to study Thai and try my best to use it as often as I can. I have a suitcase filled with books to read to keep my mind sharp and a Thai keyboard to write more. I have found more Thai dramas to watch and now more friends to chat with! I’ve met amazing teachers, mentors and lifelong friends though this journey.” For Thomas Phetmeuangmay, who studied Khmer for a second summer at the Khmer School of Language in Phnom Penh, the benefits of being in the region were even more deeply personal (see Finding ‘Home’ in Laos: A Son’s Story, page 15).

Other CSEAS students taking language in SEA over the summer were undergraduates Amy Bounnavong (Thai), Jakob Daraban (Khmer), Alexandra Dawe (Thailand), Kristen Edgar (Thai), Raul Gutierrez (Burmese), Ahyen Labanan (Tagalog), Kaela Malloe (Tagalog), Liam McCown (Burmese) and graduate students.

Learning the lingua

Nine graduate students and six undergraduates received U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) awards in 2018–19. Graduate recipients were Kristen Amstutz (anthropology, Khmer), Randy Chaing (MBA Global, Khmer), Kassandra Chhay (anthropology, Khmer), Cameron Foreman (history, Tagalog), Samuel Mallow (geology, Khmer), Matthew Peerboom (political science, Burmese), Amanda Spradling (art history, Burmese), Janet Vallejo (political science, Tagalog) and Daniel Wade (law, Indonesian). Undergraduate FLAS fellows were Samantha Brown (psychology, Burmese), Jakob Daraban (anthropology, Khmer), Thomas Phetmeuangmay (anthropology/political science, Khmer), and Adam Reedy (sociology, Thai). Not pictured were David Waite (biology, Burmese) and Ann Hodal (communications, Tagalog).

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Febrina awarded Dwight King scholarship

Graduate student Sinta Febrina (MA anthropology, 2019) has been awarded the 2019–20 Dwight Y. King Graduate Scholarship for the Study of Indonesia. Febrina, who received her bachelor’s degree in anthropology in 1998 from Padjadjaran University in Bandung and began her graduate studies at NIU in 2017, is currently pursuing a second master’s degree, this time in sociology. Her graduate anthropology research focused on DeKalb, Ill., Muslim women’s agency in negotiating and reaffirming their identity. A graduate assistant at CSEAS, Febrina has administered the Indonesian Peningkatan Kualitas Publikasi Internasional (PKPI) for the past two years. The program funded by the Indonesian government brings doctoral students from Indonesian universities to NIU for a semester to work with a selected professor-mentor on developing their research projects or articles for publication.

The $1,000 King scholarship is funded through an NIU Foundation endowment established 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. The deadline to apply for the 2020–21 King scholarship is Feb. 1.
Christopher Bechtel (Tagalog), Thommy Brown (Khmer), Anastasia Kocher (Burmese) and Matthew Werstler (Thai). In addition, Randy Chaing (Khmer) received FLAS funding and Kristen Amstutz received a Fulbright-Hays award to study Khmer for eight weeks in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap through the Advanced Study of Khmer program administered by the University of Hawai‘i-Manoa.

CSEAS has awarded 2019–20 FLAS fellowships to eight graduate students and eight undergraduate students. Graduate recipients are Christopher Bechtel (Tagalog), Anastasia Kocher (Burmese), Liam McCown (Burmese), Dan McCoy (Indonesian), Isabelle Squires (Tagalog), Dan Wade (Indonesian), Matthew Werstler (Thai) and Glynnis White (Indonesian). Undergraduate FLAS recipients are Amy Bounnavong (Thai), Jakob Daraban (Khmer), Timothy Johnson (Indonesian), Ahyen Labanan (Tagalog), Kaela Malloe (Tagalog), Jasmine Meunekithirath (Thai), Thomas Phetmeuangmay (Khmer) and Allison Simon (Tagalog).

The application deadline for summer 2020 FLAS grants is Jan. 1. The deadline to apply for 2020–21 academic-year fellowships is Feb. 1. In addition to summer and academic-year FLAS fellowships, there are numerous other funding opportunities for Southeast Asian language and area studies including:

- Blakemore Foundation
- Boren Awards for International Study
- Center for Khmer Studies
- Consortium for Teaching Indonesian (COTI)
- Florence Tan Moeson Fellowship Program
- Fulbright U.S. Scholar and English Teaching Assistant Program
- Institute of International Education
- National Science Foundation
- National Security Education Program
- US Department of State Critical Language Scholarship

LoSavio named 2019–20 Neher Fellow

History doctoral candidate JoAnn LoSavio is the 2019–20 Clark and Arlene Neher Graduate Fellowship for the Study of Southeast Asia. LoSavio received her BA in history and anthropology from NIU in 2012 and her MA in anthropology from Emory University in 2014, after which she returned to NIU to pursue her history PhD. Her research area of interest is women, cultural decolonization and their role in nation building.

LoSavio grew up in South Korea and Malaysia, and moved to the United States at the age of 16. A first-generation college graduate, LoSavio came to NIU as a transfer student and was drawn to Southeast Asian studies through two study abroad programs to Malaysia and a summer FLAS fellowship at Universiti Malaya Pahang. She is the eighteenth graduate student to receive the endowed Neher fellowship, which was established in 2002 by NIU political scientist emeritus and former CSEAS Director Clark Neher and External Programming Director emeritus and CSEAS associate Arlene Neher. The Center awards the $5,000 fellowship plus tuition waiver to one advanced-level graduate student. The deadline to apply for the 2020–21 Neher fellowship is Feb. 1.
Postcards from Burma

By Carmin Berchiolly

Shortly after the introduction of photography to the country of Burma/Myanmar in 1852, the picture postcard gained popularity among foreign travelers who visited the then-British colony. Itinerant photographers first documented Burma’s colonial visual milieu, capturing views of the landscape and people for military, ethnographic or commercial use. Shortly after the country’s annexation, opportunistic photographers like Philippe Adolph Klier (1845–1911) and D. A. Ahuja c.1865–c.1939) settled into the country, established photo studios and capitalized on the influx of tourism and the turn-of-the-century craze for postcards.

Today, Burmese picture postcards and original photographs serve as an important historical record that is worthy of academic study due to their value as visual and textual records of the past. My research considers the image’s power to support and disseminate a predetermined colonial narrative. These imagined narratives rarely benefitted the colonized. Rather, they conflated binary and often opposing notions of exoticism, modernization, Otherness and the pacification of the native population. For further reading on this topic, see my publication co-authored in English and Burmese with Lukas Birk, Reproduced: Rethinking P. A. Klier & D. A. Ahuja (2019 Lucas Birk, Myanmar Photo Archive, Fraglich Publishing), which will be catalogued in the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection at Founders Memorial Library. The book, launched in February at the Yangon Photo Festival, was printed with the support of the Goethe-Institut Myanmar. Also, look for “Burmese Picture Postcards in the Early Years of Commercial Image Production”) to be published in Dhau Jahrbuch für Außereuropäische Geschichte (Dhau: Yearbook for Non-Western History), by Röhrig University Publishing later this year.

Carmin Berchiolly (MA art history, 2018) is a research assistant and program coordinator for the Center for Burma Studies.
By Liz Denius

It was 2002. Anthropologist and then-Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) Director Susan Russell received word that the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was looking to find contacts and an outreach partner to collaborate on a youth exchange program based in the troubled region of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. An ethnically diverse province, Mindanao presented an opportunity to bring together 15- to 17-year-olds from around the region to learn about, and from, each other with the focus on inter-ethnic dialogue and conflict resolution.

Russell partnered with CSEAS associate Lina Davide-Ong, then director NIU’s International Training Office (ITO), to submit a successful grant proposal to the State Department in 2003, leading to the first batch of high-school students and adult leaders from Mindanao to arrive at NIU in spring 2004. Since then, 16 groups have gone through the innovative four-week program of leadership development at NIU, returning home empowered with ideas and plans for community projects. And since 2009, the program, now known as the Philippine Youth Leadership Program (PYLP), has been joined at NIU by the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) and, from 2015 to 2017, the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI).

Nearly 1,000 Southeast Asian youth and adult mentors have participated in these leadership and civic engagement programs at NIU. Their impact continues to be felt in community projects launched and networks of young leaders grown across the southern Philippines in the case of PYLP and Southeast Asia as a region with SEAYLP and YSEALI.

The long-term effect of these programs is a dividend not only for cultural understanding among participants within and between SEA countries, but for U.S. diplomacy as well. “We were told by our program officer at the U.S. State Department last year that this is the longest-running youth exchange program funded by the U.S. Department of State, which in turn reflects both concerns over the trajectory of peace and development in Mindanao as well as the strength of the U.S.-Philippines bilateral relationship historically and today,” Russell noted at a 15-year reunion of PYLP participants in Mindanao in 2018.

There have been less tangible dividends for U.S. diplomacy as well. Over the years, dozens of individuals and families from northern Illinois have served as unofficial ambassadors for PYLP and SEAYLP, welcoming participants into their homes for up to two weeks so they can experience daily American life.
Through email and social media, many participants and families continue to stay in touch, some even traveling to SEA to visit their one-time guests.

“It is humbling to see the alumni from all of these programs go out into the world and bring what they have learned at NIU to the public sphere,” says CSEAS Director Eric Jones. “We have had participants be chosen for United Nations’ and other global youth forums, be asked to step up to assist in times of disaster and conflict in their countries, and be motivated to advance their educations with the goals of becoming diplomats, professionals and leaders in their governments and communities.”

With CSEAS now the home of both SEAYLP and PYLP (as of 2018 with the retirements of Russell and Ong), the programs continue to evolve, with new emphases on conservation, environmental preservation, access and equity. Plans are already in the works for PYLP 2020, led by CSEAS associate and Tagalog instructor Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail, and SEAYLP 2020, led by Jones and Administrative Director Anastasia Kocher (MA public administration, 2015).

“Susan Russell and Lina Ong’s legacy is long and deep, one that CSEAS and NIU can be proud of and one we are continuing to build on,” Jones says, noting an upcoming SEAYLP alumni summit focusing on ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) that CSEAS is organizing in Jakarta in November. “Part of our mission has always been outreach. These programs are a prime example of what a center like ours can do with the regional expertise, language programs, and cultural awareness that we bring to the table.”

PYLP 2010 participant Lynrose Jane D. Genon, now a member of the English faculty at Mindanao State University, recently visited NIU and Professor Emerita Susan Russell on her way home as one of 16 participants chosen for a global forum sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme.

Selected American students from around northern Illinois join SEAYLP participants for a Global Youth Leaders Camp three days before the entire group departs for Washington, DC to tour the sites and participate in a diplomatic simulation at the State Department. “I see the world differently now because I was able to experience so much more than was just in the little bubble I have lived in my whole life,” said student Lauren Hunecke from Batavia, IL.

PYLP
Philippine Youth Leadership Program
What: Five-week intensive training program to bring together Muslim, Christian and indigenous high school students and adult leaders from the Philippine island of Mindanao to engage with each other and to learn skills in conflict resolution, civic engagement, and community activism.
Focus: Build peace and cultural understanding through network of connections between diverse communities
Began: Spring 2004
Number of participants: 443
Funded by: U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (BECA)
Amount of funding received since 2004: Approximately $4 million

SEAYLP
Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program
What: Three-week program to bring together high school students and adult leaders from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam to build leadership skills and collaborations between youth in ASEAN member states.
Focus: Regional history, community activism, cultural diversity and appreciation
Began: Fall 2009
Number of participants: 547
Funded by: U.S. Department of State (BECA)
Amount of funding received since 2009: Approximately $5 million

YSEALI
Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative
What: Five-week academic fellowship institute program established by the U.S. Department of State under the Obama administration for young adults from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states. NIU one of several U.S. universities awarded three-year grant to host institute.
Focus: Civic engagement from historical and contemporary perspectives. In collaboration with the NIU Center for Black Studies, CSEAS program covered social movements in the U.S. including civil, labor, women’s and disability rights movements, including study tour to Alabama and Georgia to visit historical civil rights sites.
Began: Fall 2015
Ended: 2017
Number of participants: 36
Funded by: U.S. Department of State (BECA)
Total amount of funding: $703,885
Finding ‘Home’ in Laos: A Son’s Story

By Thomas Phetmeuangmay
Since my first year as a student at NIU, my journey here has enabled me to both better understand a side of my family history lacking in my early years and empower me to seek answers to my heritage. Without support from the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and the faculty members associated with it, I know I would be adrift in the sea of research materials about Lao history and the Lao experience. The Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowship gave me the opportunity to see the homeland and family I still have in the region, specifically my father.

Before this past summer, my father Xaisongkham, or Hoi, and I had long been separated by an ocean—both the physical Pacific Ocean and metaphysical one of no means to contact him or connect with him on any level. Growing up in Sycamore, Ill., I was blessed to be raised by my Irish American mother, aunt and grandmother, who have nothing but love in their hearts for me and have always given me unwavering support in all of my endeavors.

For my father, spending his teen years in a foreign land surrounded by foreign languages and cultures was difficult beyond my comprehension and proved too much for him after I was born, pushing him back to Laos (officially the Lao People’s Democratic Republic). Before I educated myself on the refugee experience of Indochinese peoples in the U.S., I assumed that my existence was the sole reason for his departure. And for me, this plagued my perception of myself to the point where I would ask, “If my father doesn’t want me, who else outside of my mother’s family possibly would?”

I carried this perception for a large portion of my life until I planted myself firmly in the path that would lead me to success, triumph and peace. I wish to be clear, the love and support of my mother and her family is unmatched and I am deeply grateful for every sacrifice they have made for me.

When CSEAS awarded me a FLAS grant to study at the Khmer School of Language in Phnom Penh for a second summer, however, I knew I had to make as much effort as possible to see my father and everyone else from my family that I would otherwise never know. I made a plan that after completing my Khmer language exam and in-class program, I would travel to Laos with my close friends Jakob Daraban, a fellow FLAS student, and Kunthea Yeng, a teacher and caretaker at the Khmer School.

While Cambodia and Laos share the Southeast Asia mainland, the contrast between Cambodia and Laos stuck out immediately, with Lao infrastructure being prominent only in the major cities of Vientiane and Savannakhet, and the roads and hubs in between reminiscent of times before industrialization and modernization of village life in the region. Simply traversing the land was a challenge

Phetmeuangmay and his father Xaisongkham meet each other in his father’s home village in Laos after a years-long separation.
within itself and had it not been for my Aunt Nonanang Nang, my father’s sister from Vientiane, I would have been lost from the start with what bits and pieces I had gleaned from my family.

My family’s village, Bauk Lao Saurya, is deep in the fertile farmland and jungle areas surrounding Savannakhet. It is populated by a surprising number of people, each of whom have business with one another in one way or another, making the village more akin to a massive familial unit instead of a place where individuals happened to live near one another. The mixture of stilt houses, brick mansions and portable huts showed the diversity of village inhabitants, an arrangement familiar to me as I had read of similar situations across Laos before my arrival. I was able to meet the Head of my Family, my grandfather, and learned that he was a village elder for the community and worked in close collaboration with the village’s police force, and that his family had grown to be one of the biggest and most substantial families for the village. The family farm houses a wide array of livestock—water buffalos, cows, goats, chickens, silver and imperial pheasants, and whatever fish that dwelled in our family’s large lake—as well as agricultural products that helped keep the economy of the village intact.

The big moment came when I was finally able to meet my father after what seemed like a lifetime of celebration. The expression of pure joy and excitement that came over his face brought nearly everyone to tears. In his late 40s, he is much older than when I last saw him, but appears older still due to his lack of concern for his physical health. I tower over him by a good few inches and he called me a “giant” compared to the rest of my Lao family. He does simple construction jobs around the village while his new wife manages their home. They have no children, making me his one and only descendant.

As he talked with me and my aunt and friends, the more I came to realize how difficult separation has been for him. The mere fact that I was able to bring myself to Laos, navigate the lands with his sister, and partake in the festivities planned by the village for my “return” brought to tears of joy to both of us on several occasions. We told stories of our adventures, shared our thoughts on various subjects, and drank some of my grandfather’s rice whiskey stock as a way to celebrate my 21st birthday and the momentous reunion of father and son.

Realizing that my father still loved me changed everything. Any thoughts of inadequacy and unworthiness I’d had receded into the past and helped me see the brightness of my future. The praise from my mom, my aunt, my grandma and their family has always motivated me and helped me realize how much I belong in this world. But for a son, the love of the father means more than what I can describe on paper and makes me emotional just typing this out now.

While I have been back home for a short amount of time, I already miss everyone in my family in Laos, my grandfather “the King,” my father, my aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews and the unconditional love that they gave me in return for finally being able to see the ancestral homeland. Before I went, I had no expectations and was prepared for the worst if the worst were to unfold. But my experience in Laos was only positive. For my Laotian family there it was the return of the “son in America” and the pride they had for me was apparent on their faces every time I came into their sight—the best of outcomes.

It’s a different world for me now. The shadows of doubt and uncertainty are temporary, and light always finds a way to shine through. I think Siddhartha Gautama said it best: “Love is a gift of one’s inner soul to another so both can be whole.”

I know you probably won’t see this, Dad, but I love you and it means the world to me knowing that across the sea, you feel the same.

Thomas Phetmeuangmay is a senior majoring in political science and anthropology.
Outreach Update

Making the global local

By Matthew Jagel

In collaboration with the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, IL, CSEAS capped a busy 2018–19 on May 4 with “Teaching Vietnam: Context and Perspectives on America’s War in Southeast Asia,” a teaching conference on topics related to the Vietnam War. Twenty Chicago-area community college, high school, and middle school educators attended the half-day event. CSEAS Director and Associate History Professor Eric Jones, Outreach Coordinator Matthew Jagel (PhD history, NIU, 2015), Associate History Professor Stanley Arnold, and CSEAS associate and Vietnam veteran Alan Potkin PhD shared their respective experiences in teaching about the conflict also known as the Second Indochina War. The group also shared ideas and materials for educators to use in their respective classrooms. “Teaching methods focused on lecture strategies and engaged learning, including the use of personal narrative, audio/visual accompaniment, and having students put themselves in the shoes of decision-makers at critical turning points during the war,” Jagel said.

Following the conference, attendees were invited to a barbecue lunch at the park with area Vietnam veterans in conjunction with the release of a First Division Museum book, Swamp Rats, which recounted first-person experiences of U.S. Army First Division soldiers during the war.

Throughout the year, CSEAS’s outreach efforts focused on finding new ways to connect with area schools, teachers and communities from rural northern Illinois to metro Chicago. This year’s team of Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) Reza Fahlevi (Indonesian), Lady Aileen Ambion Orsal (Tagalog) and Khin Thu Thu Win (Burmese) not only were aces in the classroom, but also as entertaining children’s story-time leaders in area public libraries during spring semester.

The three not only drew from CSEAS’s collection of SEA-themed children’s books, but also brought in their own cultural materials to set the stories in the context of their respective countries. Outreach Graduate Assistant Rachael Skog organized the rotating reading event at DeKalb, Malta and Sycamore libraries. In addition, Jagel led two Teen Graphic Novel discussions on two Burma/Myanmar novels, The Divine and Burma Chronicles, at DeKalb Public Library. On Sept. 8, more than 250 Dekalb Public Library patrons stepped in to a whirlwind adventure around the world as the customs of eight different countries were represented throughout the library. Alongside bilingual story times in Mexico, British invasion of the Beatles, and cocktail samosas and Pani Puri in India, CSEAS offered a glimpse of Philippine culture with Tinikling traditional dance, a craft and boy bawang, an adobe-flavored corn snack. Tagalog FLTA Lady Aileen Ambion Orsal charmed younger attendees with her telling of the Pineapple Legend and performing ikit ikit, the duck dance. She also prepared take-away recipe cards to go along with photos of authentic Filipino dishes and looping cooking video.

CSEAS represented Southeast Asia to students, teachers and parents attending the annual Jefferson Elementary School Multicultural Fair May 2 in DeKalb. Outreach GA Rachael Skog, FLTA Reza Fahlevi and FLAS fellow Kristie Amstutz shared do-it-yourself wayang puppet kits, Philippine paper boat folding and Asian snacks. Exhibit visitors also left knowing how to say hello and goodbye in Indonesian (Selamat malam and Sampai jumpa).

Reaching into Chicago-area Southeast Asian communities, CSEAS associate and
Burmese language professor Tharaphi Than (World Languages and Cultures) facilitated a visit to NIU, CSEAS and the Center for Burma Studies by a group of high school students from Chicago-area Chin community on Oct. 26. While on campus, the group met with academic advisers from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the College of Business, and staff from Admissions and Financial Aid. The visit was part of CSEAS's ongoing efforts to connect with area SEA communities and prospective heritage students. More such visits are planned for 2019–20.

In addition to visiting students, CSEAS also welcomed visiting lecturers in fall and spring. In the fall, Sreypich Thith, Program Officer at Center for Khmer Studies, gave a lecture Sept. 10 about fellowship and program opportunities for faculty, graduate researchers and undergraduate students at CKS. Angkor Wat archaeologist Dr. Darith Ea visited Oct. 29 for a discussion of new archaeological evidence on temple construction and art production at Koh Ker temple during the reign of Jayavarman IV. In the spring, while on campus to give a CSEAS Friday brownbag lecture, University of Toronto political scientist Matthew Walton conducted a graduate seminar, “Human Nature and Buddhist Politics in the Aggañña Sutta: Contrasting Interpretations from Burma and Thailand,” Feb. 8. The seminar was co-sponsored by the Toqueville Forum in Political Science and CSEAS.

Ian Holliday, University of Hong Kong Professor and Vice President for Teaching and Learning, visited campus April 10 to donate 29 paintings by contemporary Myanmar artists to the Center for Burma Studies’ Burma Art Collection and to give a special CSEAS lecture, “Liberalism and Democracy in Myanmar.” Holliday, author of a book by the same title published in 2018 by Oxford University Press, is also the owner of the Thukhuma Art Collection, which showcases a variety of contemporary Myanmar artists and their perspectives on a society in transition.

Matthew Jagel (Ph.D. history, 2015) is the undergraduate adviser and outreach coordinator for CSEAS.

Center for Burma Studies Director Catherine Raymond, second from left, accepts the donation of 29 paintings by contemporary Myanmar artists from Ian Holliday, left, owner of the Thukhuma Collection, at a reception April 10 in Founders Memorial Library. At right are CSEAS Director Eric Jones and Inya Institute Executive Director François Tainturier.
Connecting across countries, cultures

Colleen Gray (MA anthropology, 2014) is International Student Recruiter for the College of Lake County in Grayslake, Ill. Gray previously worked at CSEAS as Outreach Coordinator and Administrative Director of the U.S. Department of State’s 2015–17 Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) program at NIU. Prior to her departure in October, Gray spent two and a half weeks traveling to six SEA countries (Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Indonesia) for follow-on meetings with some of the 60 YSEALI participants she shepherded through the program.

SEAYLP Scholar Ye Pyae Thu (BA business administration, 2018) linked up with 2017–18 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Arkar Kyaw 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. The pair won a competitive $25,000 U.S. Department of State Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund grant to fund the project. Collaborating with the duo were three participants from two past YSEALI programs held at NIU: Kyu Lae Thu (2015) and Ei Nyein Phyu (2017) and Htet Mong Aung (2017).

Sean Dolan (MA anthropology, 2010) received his PhD in anthropology from Emory University this spring and will be teaching social science writing in Emory’s Writing Program. His dissertation was entitled “Halal Things: Ontology and Ethics in the Malaysian Halal Ecosystem.”

Tiffanesha Williams (MA political science, 2014) received her PhD in political science from the University of Missouri this spring and is headed to American University in Washington, D.C., where she will be a postdoctoral fellow in the School of Public Affairs. Williams attended the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs in October at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minn., where she met up with fellow alum Philip Cerepak (MA history, 2013), now a PhD candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Alexandra Salazar (MA anthropology, 2015) will be working on her doctoral dissertation at the University of London, having just completed a year of field research on Khmer shadow puppet theater this past year in Cambodia. Before leaving Siem Reap, she presented “Navigating the Preservation and Innovation of Khmer Shadow Puppet Theater in Contemporary Cambodia” July 25 at the Center for Khmer Studies.

Francesca Pase (MA education, 2015), a doctoral candidate in educational philosophy and practice at the University of Georgia, is wrapping up nearly four months in Indonesia using video to conduct field research on how children navigate the emotional landscape of the kindergarten classroom. She writes: “I started out by spending the month of Ramadan filming in a village kindergarten in East Java. From that video I created a short film that documented the kindergarten’s day to day activities over that month. Since then I have been showing that film to Indonesian children, scholars and early childhood education experts and practitioners throughout Java... recording their impressions and interpretations of the children’s behavior.” Through a grant from the American Institute for Indonesian Studies, Pase gave several lectures in Yogyakarta and Semarang on her research; she also will be presenting at the 2019 International Re-conceptualizing Early Childhood Education Conference in October in New Mexico. Coincidentally, Pase met up with the NIU delegation visiting Indonesia in July (page 3), which included Dean Laura Elish-Piper and External and Global Programs Director Terry Borg from the College of Education.

Dissertation by documentary

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Shoua Yang (PhD political science, 2006) is an associate professor of political science at St. Cloud State University where he teaches comparative politics and ethnic
politics in Southeast Asia, public administration and public policy.

Rachel Jacob (BA political science/history, 2018) is a joint JD/LL.M candidate in international business and trade law starting her second year at The John Marshall Law School in Chicago.

Andrew Waite (BA human resource management, 2018) is working for the human resources department at the Chicago law firm Chapman & Cutler, focusing on professional development, diversity, and pro bono activities.

Julien Ehrenkönig (MA Anthropology 2014) is completing his dissertation research as an anthropology PhD candidate at Temple University in Philadelphia after conducting fieldwork in Indonesia in 2018. There, he visited over 40 bookstores and met local comic artists as part of his investigation into how comic books and graphic novels are being used to communicate and shape Islamic discourses in Indonesia.

Iqra Anugrah (PhD political science, 2018) is starting a two-year postdoctoral fellowship from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University this fall. While in Indonesia as a Correspondent Fellow for Australian National University’s New Mandala blog, Anugrah has continued to research fisher and peasant communities. He co-hosted the panel Beyond Disciplinary Diversity and Debates in Parallel Universes: Anthropology and Political Science in Conversation for the International Symposium of Journal Anthropologi Indonesia in late July at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Earlier in the year, fellow POLS alumnus Dani Muhtada (PhD political science 2014), founder of the Institute – Pesantren Riset Al-Muhtada at Semarang State University in Central Java, invited Anugrah to present a guest lecture on agrarian politics in post-authoritarian Indonesia.

Colin Finnegan (BA political science, 2016) is a third-year law student at the University of Kansas School of Law.

Bringkop Vora-Urai (MM world music, 1998) is a faculty member in the Music Department at Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and active in promoting arts and culture in the city.
Student News

Degrees, dissertations and accomplishments

Three PhDs, one MBA, one JD, six MAs and one MS were among the graduate students in the CSEAS orbit receiving degrees during the 2018-19 academic year and summer, with five of them also receiving a Graduate Certificate in Southeast Asian Studies (marked with an asterisk). From the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 2017–18 Neher Fellow Nicole Loring* earned her PhD in political science; her dissertation is entitled “The Roadmap to Liberalization: Myanmar’s Transition from Military to Civilian Rule.” Katie Chludzinski Dixon received her PhD in history; her dissertation is entitled “The Search for ‘Home’: Anglo-Burmese Identity at the End of Empire.” Randy Chaing completed the College of Business’s one-year Global MBA Program. Daniel Wade received his Juris Doctor from the College of Law and will continue on for his MBA at the College of Business while working at the Rockford, Ill., law firm of Holmstrom Kennedy. Indonesian student Sirojuddin Arif also received his PhD in political science; his dissertation is entitled “Farmers, Workers, and State Responses to the Food Crises: State-Society Conflicts and the Politics of Agricultural Development in Indonesia and Nigeria.”

Awarded master’s degrees were Thommy Brown (MA history), Kassandra Chhay* (anthropology), Sinta Febrina (anthropology), Sammy Mallow (MS Geology), Amanda Spradling* (art history), Markie Striegel* (art history with museum studies certificate), and Rachael Skog* (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). Receiving bachelor's degrees with a minor in Southeast Asian Studies during the same period were nine students, including seven in May: Raul Gutierrez (political science), Ann Hodal (rhetoric and public communication), Liam McCown (political science/IR), Jordan Niedziela (political science/IR), Adam Reedy (sociology), Elizabeth Russo (studio art), and Autumn Smith (geography). Minors Alex Deleon (history) and Melissa Cardella (communication/media studies) received their bachelor’s degrees in December.

Four Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) Scholars also completed their programs of study in 2018–19, graduating with high honors. Undergraduates I Younan An (2014 SEAYLP-Cambodia), who was named NIU’s 2018 Lincoln Laureate, graduated in December with a bachelor’s in political science, Thimoro Cheng (2014-Cambodia) with a bachelor’s in chemistry and Hnin Eaindray Lin (2014-Myanmar) with a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering. Mar Louie Mayubay (2012-Philippines), who received a master’s degree in accountancy in 2017 as a SEAYLP Scholar, received his second master’s in management information systems in spring. He passed his Certified Public Accountant exam and is working for the Adelfia accounting firm in Chicago. His clients include the Illinois State Lottery, the Department of Agriculture, and the Illinois Supreme Court.

Other noteworthy student accomplishments in 2018–19:

Ann Hodal (BA rhetoric and public communication), who is pursuing an MA in communication at NIU beginning this fall, received the History Department’s first Anita M. Andrew Memorial Scholarship, an award set up in the memory of late History Professor Anita Andrew. The award, named for Andrew, a China scholar who died Dec. 14, goes to a graduating senior committed to attending a master's program in which they will pursue interdisciplinary study of Asia.

Graduate student Matthew Peerboom (political science) and undergraduate Thomas Phetmeuangmay (anthropology/political science) received CSEAS Language Awards of Excellence April 23 from the World Languages and Cultures Department, Peerboom for Burmese and Phetmeuangmay for Khmer and Thai.

Kassandra Chhay (MA anthropology, 2019), whose master’s research explored the educational experiences of the 1.5

History making

The Graduate School named graduate FLAS fellow Thommy Brown the 2018–19 Outstanding MA Student in History. Brown, who is continuing at NIU to pursue his doctorate, presented “Heralds and Hawks: American Journalism and Cambodia 1965-1970” at the Southeast Asian studies spring student conference.
generation of Cambodian Americans, is headed to the University of Minnesota to pursue her doctorate, with four years of funding for the program in culture and teaching capped by a two-year assistantship.

Sammy Mallow (MS geology and environmental sciences, 2019) presented “Water Quality and Small Unmanned Aerial System Photogrammetry of Boeng Cheung Ek Treatment Wetland, Phnom Penh, Cambodia” March 8 at his department’s Spring Colloquium Series. Since graduating in May, he has taken a job as a geologist for Ramboll, a Denmark-based engineering, design and consulting firm with offices in 35 countries, including the U.S.


Matthew Werstler (MM candidate, world music) had a busy spring presenting on his research about the relationship between melodies, geography, and the identity of the Zhuang, a Tai-speaking people of southwest China. He spoke at the Midwest chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology conference March 23–24 at the University of Dayton, the Trans-Asia Graduate Student Conference April 12–14 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at Passages: World Music (PhD candidate, sociology, Northwestern University) for “Paired

Winning words at Nexus: Southeast Asia

This year’s Southeast Asian Studies Spring Student Conference, held March 30 in Swen Parson Hall, was packed with a full day of presentations on topics ranging from U.S. foreign policy in the region to water quality issues in Phnom Penh. Twenty-three students took their turn at the podium in panels on either side of University of Pittsburgh ethnomusicologist Andrew Weintraub’s keynote address tying together the Beatles, pop music, and post-independence politics in Indonesia.

Dan McCoy (PhD candidate, history), who presented “A Conclave of Connivers: Nixonian-Kissingerian Policy toward Cambodia during the Vietnam War,” won the conference award for best graduate paper. Paul Un (BA candidate, politics and government, University of Puget Sound), won for his undergraduate paper “Balancing and Bandwagoning in Southeast Asia: Driving China Toward Revisionism.” Honorable mentions in both categories went to Alyssa Lynne (PhD candidate, sociology, Northwestern University) for “Paired

Locating Global Traditions in Southeast Asian Music and Performance April 19 1t Indiana University-Bloomington.

Timothy Johnson (BA candidate political science) was re-elected president of NIU’s Model UN Club in the spring and was awarded the Student Engagement Fund scholarship, the Karen Kadens scholarship, the Department of World Languages and Cultures scholarship for minors, and a travel grant to study abroad in China over the summer.

Hnin Eaindry Lin (BS mechanical engineering, 2018), part of a design team of senior mechanical and electrical engineering students, won the award for best overall project at the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology’s Senior Design Day in December. Their project was a motorized assisted walker, which helps lift an individual from sitting to standing position and allows them to control the wheels on the walker with a joystick and avoid collisions with a sensor.

Limeng Ong (MA candidate, political science) presented “China’s No Strings Attached: Aiding the Status Quo in Cambodia” on a panel chaired by CSEAS associate Kheang Un (Political Science) at the spring 2019 Association of Asian Studies annual meeting in Denver.
A Year in Pictures

Outtakes from 2018–19

That degree feels so good
At far left, SEA minor Adam Reedy (BA sociology, 2019), center, celebrates commencement in May with CSEAS faculty associates Catherine Raymond (Art History) and Kanjana Thepboriruk (World Languages and Cultures—Thai). At left, former Neher Fellow Nicole Loring (PhD political science, 2019) styles her degree status after passing her dissertation in spring.

Say it with food
Southeast Asia Club members I Younan An, Janet Vallejo (pictured), Kristen Amstutz, Rachael Skog, Kassandra Chhay, Ratanak Khun and Tagalog FLTA Lady Aileen Ambion Orsal prepare Southeast Asian dishes in April for nearly 200 people attending the weekly Intercultural Café at the Immanuel Lutheran Church. On the menu was Filipino lumpia, tofu stir-fry, Cambodian cabbage soup, sweet and sour pineapple beef, chicken and bell peppers, fried rice, and pad Thai.

A year to remember
After two semesters at NIU, the sign of the Huskie comes naturally to 2018-19 Foreign Language Teaching Assistants Khin Thu Thu Win (Burmese), Reza Fahlevi (Indonesian) and Lady Aileen Ambion Orsal (Tagalog).

Good dog
Trainer Lisa Boland visits CSEAS with Mission, as part of the NIU mascot’s weekly Monday visits to various campus locations. Hugs, coos and selfies by CSEAS and Center for Burma Studies staffs ensued.

Tuning up
At last fall’s Area Studies Open House, new gamelan instructor Alex Yoffe, playing in front, takes a few pieces of NIU’s large Javanese gamelan set out for a spin on the Pottenger House driveway with Assistant CSEAS Director Jui-Ching Wang and world music graduate student Matthew Werstler.
Gifts that will keep on giving

By Hao Phan

The Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia collection was fortunate to receive 1,750 books, 56 journal titles and four archival collections in 2019–20, a virtual bounty of donated materials ranging from Thai anti-communist posters to Vietnamese American literature to primary research materials from faculty and alumni.

In December, the collection accepted a box of slides and a collection of 13 Thai anti-communist propaganda posters and booklets from alumnus George V. Smith (Ph.D. history, 1974). The posters were collected by the Kalasin Boy’s High School from 1967 to 1969 and were almost certainly funded by the United States Information Service, Smith said.

The posters are fascinating materials for the study of Thailand’s history during the Cold War. Although not fighting directly in the Vietnam War, Thailand provided important logistical support to the operations of the U.S. military in Vietnam. About 80 percent of all air strikes of the U.S. Air Force over North Vietnam originated from air bases in Thailand.

Two of the largest air bases were located in Northeastern Thailand, where a Thai communist insurgency was most active. These anti-communist posters, printed with American funding, were part of the Thai government’s efforts to battle communist influences in the region at the time. While primary sources related to the Vietnam War are plentiful, there are very few materials on the communists in Thailand. These posters help reduce that gap.

Smith and his wife Chrystal also donated a box of slides, adding to Southeast Asia images they have previously given to the collection. The couple served in the Peace Corps in Kalasin, Thailand, from 1967 to 1969 and lived in Phnom Penh in 1994 and 1995. Since that time, they have traveled back to the region numerous times time. Their latest donation consists of images of Angkor Wat from 1969, 1994, 1995, and 2009 as well as photographs of other sites (Chiang Mai, Ayutthaya, Sukhothai, Luang Prabang, Phnom Rung, Phi Mai, among others) and general village and farming scenes from Thailand (1967–69 and 2009), Cambodia (1994–95 and 2009) and Laos (1995, 2001, and 2009).

In March, Vietnamese American author Nguyen Tan Hung donated a collection of 845 Vietnamese books. Nguyen, who lives in Illinois, was born in 1945 and was a former navy officer for South Vietnam. He came to the U.S. as a refugee in 1975 and returned to college, receiving his bachelor's and master’s degrees in engineering technology and electrical engineering respectively. For many years, while working full-time raising his family, Nguyen also wrote. With more than 20 books published, he is one of the most prolific overseas Vietnamese authors. Nguyen’s memoirs and fiction reflect the dual experience of a person living through the war in Vietnam and as an immigrant in America.

Nguyen’s donation mostly comprises works of Vietnamese literature, including many written by Vietnamese authors in the U.S. Although the focus in library collection development are materials from Vietnam, for Vietnamese studies it is also important to collect Vietnamese materials published here for two reasons.

Luce awards library grant

NIU Libraries have received a grant of $610,000 from the Henry Luce Foundation for the Southeast Asia Digital Library for four years, 2019 to 2023. This is part of a $1.2 million grant awarded by the foundation to the Southeast Asia Librarians group (CORMOSEA). Funding will be used to hire a web developer for the project at NIU and to add new content to the digital library, which was established in 2005.

continued on page 26
First, as a consequence of the war, many writers and intellectuals moved to the U.S. where they continued to write. The works of these authors are essential for the study of literature and history of Vietnam, especially from the perspective of South Vietnam. Second, due to censorship still existing in Vietnam today, many works deemed politically sensitive by the Vietnamese government can only be published overseas. These works are often more candid than works published in Vietnam in their depiction of politics and life there. The majority of these donated books were not previously available at NIU and will be added to the collection as they are cataloged.

In May, University of Missouri anthropologist and provost emeritus Brian Foster, who received his undergraduate degree in history from NIU and received his Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Michigan, returned to campus with a gift of 19 boxes of research archives from fieldwork he conducted in Thailand in 1970–71 and 1981. The Thai scholar’s early research focused on minority traders in three Mon and one Thai village while his 1981 work addressed a social network approach to social structure. His materials include questionnaires in Thai, Foster’s interview notes in English, tape recordings and resulting publications, including Foster’s dissertation. Professor Foster also came to visit the SEA Collection and NIU on July 26, 2019.

In July, Anthropology Professor Judy Ledgerwood, Acting Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a Cambodia specialist, donated to the library four boxes of documents from the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). The United Nations established UNTAC in October 1991, a decade after the Khmer Rouge collapse in 1979 followed by the Vietnamese military occupation of Cambodia, to assist Cambodia in its transition to a stable and democratic nation. UNTAC missions included supervising the ceasefire and the end of foreign military assistance; disarming all armed forces of the Cambodia parties; controlling and supervising the activities of the administration structures; ensuring and respecting human rights; and organizing free and fair elections. Comprising between 15,000 to 20,000 UN personnel working in Cambodia between 1992 and 1993, UNTAC was the largest UN mission in history. Ledgerwood served with UNTAC’s Information and Education Division at the time and later wrote an informative paper providing an “on the ground” view of UNTAC’s successes and shortcomings: (“UN Peacekeeping Missions: The Lessons from Cambodia” (Asia Pacific Issues, East West Center, No. 11, March 1994). The four boxes of UNTAC documents include analysis reports from the Information/Education Division, Military Situation Reports, Provincial Activity Reports, Mixed Military Working Group Reports, Civil Police Situation Reports, Civil Administration Reports, and Control Team Reports by province. These are invaluable primary sources for the study of history and politics of contemporary Cambodia.

Retired CSEAS faculty also made significant contributions this year. Indonesian Language Professor Emerita Patricia Henry donated 426 books related to Indonesia and SEA. Anthropology Professor Emerita and Philippines specialist Susan Russell contributed 304 books and 21 journal titles related to the Philippines and SEA. The Hart Collection also received 145 books related to SEA from Fe Susan Go, the Southeast Asia Librarian at the University of Michigan.

Hao Phan is curator of the Donn V. Hart Southeast Asia Collection. Parts of this article originally appeared in Founders Keepers, the Founders Memorial Library newsletter.
Over the summer, Northern Illinois University Press became an imprint of Cornell University Press, a partnership seen by some as a new academic publishing model, according to Publishers Weekly, and which will give NIU’s Southeast Asia series a new home. Under the agreement announced in April, NIU Press keeps an acquisitions editor and a faculty editorial board. Cornell takes over editing, production and design, marketing, distribution and sales. CSEAS associate Kenton Clymer (History) coordinates the Southeast Asia series, the most current volume being the forthcoming Semi-Civilized: The Moro Village at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition by Creighton University historian and CSEAS alumnus Michael C. Hawkins (PhD history, 2009). This is Hawkins’ third book for the series. His Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in the Philippines’ Muslim South was published in 2012 and the Tagalog Verb Dictionary in 2011 with CSEAS associate and Tagalog instructor Rhodalyne Gallo-Crail. Hawkins will be on campus in March to discuss his new book at a CSEAS Friday brownbag lecture. In addition to the SEA series, which includes Clark Neher’s Southeast Asia: Crossroads of the World (2006), Cornell will continue to publish Burmese and Vietnamese language textbooks volumes developed by the Center’s Southeast Asia Publications (SEAP) program before its closure in 2009.

As of July 1, the Center for Burma Studies (CBS) officially began a new partnership with the University of Hawai’i Press to publish and distribute its Journal of Burma Studies, one of the only interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journals focusing on Burma/Myanmar. Edited by CBS Director and CSEAS associate Catherine Raymond (Art History) and anthropologist Jane M. Ferguson of Australian National University, the first collaborative issue, Vol. 23.1, is in print, with Vol. 23.2 in press. JBS launched in 1997, co-sponsored by CBS and the Burma Studies Group, with the goal of drawing together research and critical reflection on Burma/Myanmar from a variety of disciplines ranging from art history and religious studies to economics and law. “We are pleased to partner with the NIU Center for Burma Studies on this important and unique journal,” said UH Press Interim Director and Publisher Joel Cosseboom. The complete content of the journal is available online in Project MUSE.

“[This is] a rare ‘finding yourself’ travel story done right, gently relating the grit and discomfort of a truly expanding consciousness.”—Foreword Reviews

“[Have Fun in Burma] is an affecting coming-of-age tale, and is perhaps most valuable for its look at Myanmar’s complicated political situation.”—Publishers Weekly

“Have Fun in Burma is filled with startling images and surprising bits of wisdom. Metro has created both a compelling story and a keen-eyed examination of a young American woman’s place in a globalized-yet also highly particularized-world.”—Keija Parssinen, author of The Unraveling of Mercy Louis

The NIU Southeast Asian Series was established in 2016 and publishes academic works and some books for general readers in all areas of Southeast Asian studies, including United States relations with Southeast Asia.

Interested authors should contact the Series Editor Kenton Clymer at kclymer@niu.edu.
One last look

When Cambodian student I Younan An (BA political science, 2018) first came to NIU in 2014 as a Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) participant, he knew he wanted to return as a student. That year, NIU began offering graduate and undergraduate tuition scholarships to SEAYLP alumni. I Younan signed right up, beginning as a freshman in January 2015 along with four other SEAYLP students from Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam. I Younan made the most of his time at NIU, from making stellar grades to being a residential advisor to volunteering in campus organizations including the Student Association, Model UN and the Huskie Food Pantry. For these accomplishments, NIU selected him as the 2018 Lincoln Laureate. Here at CSEAS we know I Younan best for being an effervescent member of our CSEAS community. This year, he served as a graduate assistant for SEAYLP (he began graduate studies in public administration in January 2019) and was president of the Southeast Asia Club. This fall, he begins a new chapter in his life at the University of Pittsburgh, where he will pursue a master’s degree in international studies. We have no doubt that wherever I Younan goes, he will make the same lasting impression he leaves here.

Welcome to the CSEAS donor family

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Center for Southeast Asian Studies

520 College View Court
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-753-1771
cseas@niu.edu

ONLINE
• CSEAS: www.niu.edu/cseas/
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Eric Jones, Director
815-753-1771, eajones@niu.edu
Jui-Ching Wang, Assistant Director
815-753-8822, jcwang@niu.edu
Lisa Heal, Office Manager
815-753-1771, lheal@niu.edu
Liz Denius, Communications
815-753-1901, edenius@niu.edu
Matthew Jagel, Outreach/Advising
815-753-1595, mjagel2@niu.edu