

COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

# *The* GLOBAL CONNECTION

Print Edition - Summer 2021



## WHAT'S INSIDE:

*Kiongozi Student Winners  
International Educators of the Year  
Community Partnership  
Making a Difference in Thailand  
Farewell to a Study Abroad Colleague*



COLUMBUS STATE  
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR  
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT





## About Us

The Center for Global Engagement (CGE) ensures that all CSU students have opportunities to become globally competent. Students must have the knowledge, cultural self-awareness, and adaptability to function effectively in an interconnected world. It is through the engagement of other cultures and by studying, working and living with diverse peoples, that CSU students will be prepared for working in business, government, or education, and contributing to their communities, all of which are globally connected. The CGE is a proud recipient of the 2014 NAFSA Simon Award and the 2019 AASCU Innovation in Internationalization Award.



### Staff Members

**Dr. Eric Spears**

Executive Director  
Mildred Miller Fort Foundation  
Eminent Scholar & Chair

**Dr. Erinn Bentley**

Associate Director

**Ms. Janet Crane**

Coordinator of International Student  
and Scholar Services

**Ms. Christine Shaw**

Coordinator of Global Engagement

**Ms. Natalia Mira**

Graduate Assistant

**Mr. Mohammed Dukuly**

Graduate Assistant

**Ms. Elizabeth Cooper**

Graduate Intern & Newsletter Editor

# GREETINGS!

All of us in the CGE anxiously await the re-opening of study abroad in the 2021-2022 academic year. CSU's Education Abroad, which includes study abroad, overseas student research, international internships, and service-learning abroad, will phase in its semester locations in a methodical and safe manner. We plan for students to study abroad in England, Ireland, Japan, and South Korea in the fall semester. The CGE staff and others in the CSU administration are cautiously monitoring COVID-19 in these countries through a combined set of resources from the University System of Georgia (USG), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and via a contracted security analysis firm, On Call, which integrates analysis from the governments of all countries where study abroad programs occur. At present we have 13 students planning to study abroad for the fall semester. While this number is low compared to most 'normal' semesters, it represents a hopeful return to in-person travel and study. More programs are scheduled for Jan-term, spring, maymester, and summer 2022.

I am also excited to report that international students are returning to CSU. In the fall of 2020, only 8 students made it to CSU -- most of them were transfer students from other campuses in the USA. The CGE anticipates 30 new international students from various overseas locations, including two Georgia Rotary Student Program (GRSP) scholarship students from Colombia. The GRSP could not send students last year. The return of international students is not only exciting but necessary; their presence in classes and residence halls bring intercultural opportunities to all students.

There is also a re-organization with CSU's international recruitment and admissions. As part of the Shared Administrative Services (SAS) re-organization at CSU, the CGE will now coordinate international student recruitment and admissions processes for undergraduate and graduate programs. The CGE will continue to issue I-20 documents for the English Language Institute (ELI). This reorganization does not mean the CGE operates alone. The CGE will still work closely with the director of CSU Recruitment, Ms. Kristin Williams, and the director of the ELI, Ms. Samantha Miller-Gurski. The CGE is eager to take on this new project and is grateful for the wonderful job that Admissions has done in the past. The CGE is also appreciative of the international leadership Kristin Williams has given at CSU and with Study Georgia, the former statewide network of colleges across the state that recruited international students.

All of us look forward to a new year and are grateful for your support during this most difficult period of international shutdown. Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier and your support has represented that hope for us. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Eric K. Spears, Ph.D.

Mildred Fort Foundation Eminent Scholar & Chair of International Education

## Newsletter Contributors:



**Elizabeth Cooper**  
Graduate Student Intern



**Mohammed Dukuly**  
Graduate Assistant



**William Harper**  
International Studies Graduate

# CGE UPDATES

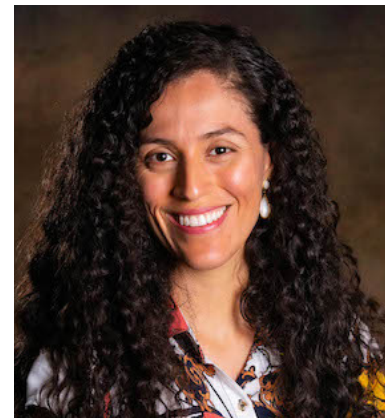
## International Educator of the Year Award

Columbus State University recognizes and rewards faculty and staff members who have made significant contributions to the university's internationalization and to the international learning outcomes of our students. Nominees must be current and active CSU faculty or staff members who have been employed at CSU during the whole of the previous calendar year. This award is presented annually at the Faculty and Staff Recognition and Excellence Awards Ceremony. The winners of 2020 and 2021 award cycles are presented here.

### 2021 Recipient

**Dr. Carolina Paleaz-Morales. Associate Professor of TESOL and Writing  
Department of English (College of Letters and Sciences)**

Dr. Paleaz-Morales has demonstrated her leadership in international education through her role as the chair of the study abroad scholarships committee, her study abroad program activity with Belize, and her commitment to helping students whose English is their second language adapt to the culture and writing at CSU. She is an advocate for education abroad and international students on campus.



### 2020 Recipient

**Dr. Rania Hodhod, Assistant Chair and Associate Professor  
TSYS School of Computer Science**

Dr. Hodhod has been a leader in the TSYS School of Computer Science's international endeavors for several years. She has organized and led study abroad programs in Japan and South Korea. In addition, Dr. Hodhod has led the effort to establish academic linkages between CSU and institutions in her native Egypt, including the most recent bilateral agreement with Ain Shams University in Cairo.



# CGE UPDATES

## Kiongozi Award Winners

The word “**kiongozi**” means “leader” in Swahili. Each year the CGE awards this honor to a graduating international student based on demonstrated extra-curricular involvement and academic leadership.



**Maria Camila Tobar Bejarano** won the **2021 Kiongozi Award**.

She is a Colombian citizen, who began her academic program at CSU in the Fall of 2013 in the Bachelor of Business Administration program. After graduating, she returned to CSU to complete her Master's in Business Administration and is currently completing her Master's in Cybersecurity. Camila was a member of the high-achieving women's Columbus State Tennis team for 4 years. For 3 of those years, the team reached the quarter-finals of the NCAA tournament. She is currently an Assistant Coach for the team and is an invaluable part of their operation and training. As a tennis team member and assistant coach, Camila participates in fundraising activities with local community members along with hosting tennis clinics and camps for youth in our area. This outreach promotes CSU and helps to promote internationalization within the community.

The **2020 award** went to **Kevin (Omar) Castillo**. Kevin was an international student from Colombia in the MBA Program at CSU. He first came to the U.S. in 2015 to study Business Management. Kevin, who graduated in December 2020, was an International Student Services Scholarship recipient (2015-2017). We could not celebrate his award in 2020 because of the pandemic. Kevin was a Graduate Assistant in the CGE and served as President of the International Club. He was an active member of CHISPA (CSU Hispanic Assoc.) and then served as an advisor in 2018. He worked as an admissions counselor in 2018 and a G.A. in the admissions office in 2019. Kevin demonstrated outstanding leadership, excelled in the classroom, and was instrumental in promoting cross-cultural awareness among the student body as a part of the International Learning Community, leading many of our Global Dialogues. Kevin cares deeply about the international student population as well as advancing internationalization both on campus and in the Columbus community.



## CGE UPDATES

### Staff Commitment to Service Award Winner

#### Ms. Christine Shaw

Congratulations to the recipient of the Staff Commitment to Service award, Ms. Christine Shaw! Ms. Shaw is the Center for Global Engagement's Coordinator of Global Engagement. She will be celebrating her sixteenth anniversary at CSU this August.

When asked about what she enjoys about her job, Ms. Shaw states, "I love being able to connect with people from all over the world, as well as being able to help CSU students see the world and to experience other cultures! We work to bring international students and scholars to CSU, as well as with foreign universities and providers in connection with study abroad programs. That makes the position interesting and varied."

When Ms. Shaw is not at CSU, she spends her time reading, knitting, and playing with her two dachshunds. Her German heritage is very important to her and always enjoys talking to people who have visited Germany.



### Dr. Eric Spears - CEPA Foundation Board of Academic Advisors



Dr. Eric Spears renewed his service role on the Board of Academic Advisors with the CEPA Foundation, a non-profit education abroad program based in Ingersheim, Germany and Strasbourg, France. The board advises CEPA Foundation on curricular and programmatic matters and includes representatives from the University of Connecticut, University of Florida, South Dakota State University, Arizona State University, and University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. CSU operates programs with CEPA in Strasbourg, France and service-learning programs in Guatemala and Costa Rica.

*Dr. Spears at CEPA's Château de Pourtalès in Strasbourg, where he led a 2020 Jan-term study abroad program.*



Cultural and Educational  
Programs Abroad

## CGE UPDATES

# Community Partnership: International Network

*Ms. Janet Crane, Coordinator of International Student & Scholars, works closely with the International Network as her community service in the CGE.*



The International Network of Columbus was convened in 1995 by Mrs. Merlina E. Salamanca. The initial meeting was attended by approximately 25 community members from Columbus and the surrounding areas, which included many ethnic backgrounds. The group had a common goal of embracing different ethnic backgrounds while working together on projects within the community culturally, educationally, and socially. The group collaborated and worked to promote the internationalization of the Columbus community for many years.

### Collaboration with Columbus State University

In 2014 an official partnership was formed between the International Network, led by Mrs. Salamanca and Janet Crane, who is the International Student Coordinator for the Center for Global Engagement. The goal of the collaboration was for the International Network to provide community and financial support for the international students of Columbus State University. The International Network hosted several events for the international students, which included holiday dinners, cookouts, and events during the yearly International Education Week festivities.

The International Network decided that they wanted to create a scholarship fund specifically for international students at CSU, so they hosted community fundraising events. This was the first scholarship ever to be designated specifically to international students at CSU. The first \$500 scholarship was awarded in the Fall of 2017 and has continued each fall since then. In early 2020, due to family obligations, Mrs. Salamanca decided that she could no longer continue to lead the International Network of Columbus. After her many years of dedicated service to the Columbus community and Columbus State University Mrs. Salamanca dissolved the organization. In order to continue the legacy of the International Network of Columbus, the group donated the remaining \$4,000 in funds to CSU and the Center for Global Engagement. The scholarship will continue to be awarded until the funds have been depleted.

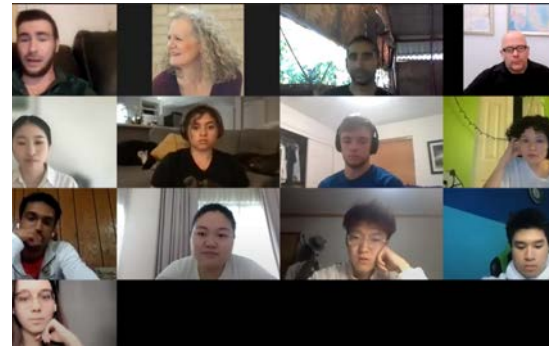
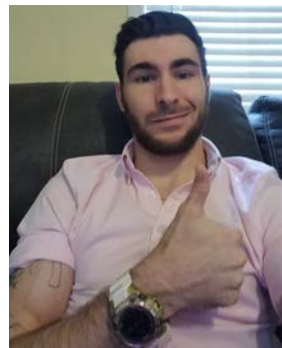
**The CGE is forever thankful for the support of the International Network of Columbus, its members, and Mrs. Merlina E Salamanca.**



## Changing the World One Zoom at a Time: Virtual International Internships by Mohammed Dukuly



Timothy Sabau, aka Tj, is a political science and international studies certificate student who participated in the Global Learning Collective virtual internship program. This is a collaboration of several study abroad organizations throughout the world: the Asia Institute (Thailand), CEPA Foundation (Germany), Campus B (Brazil), and EDU Africa (South Africa). Tj is married, so being overseas for long periods of time was not a viable option. This virtual opportunity provided him with an excellent opportunity to gain practical international experience and to fulfill the requirements of CSU's International Studies Certificate program. But it was the transferable problem-solving and intercultural soft skills of working with other people across the world that attracted Tj to the multi-country internship that operated in Thailand, Brazil, Germany, and South Africa. The CGE and CSU's Center for Experiential Learning and Career Design partnered on this virtual international internship.



Tj was selected as the team leader for the project in Thailand, which focused on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). There were times when Tj had to meet with his team at 11:30 p.m. to adjust for the 11-12 hour time differences in each Asian country (it was already tomorrow in Asia). Specifically, Tj's team used SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) as a guide for their project. Together they worked with a non-profit organization called OurLand, which focuses on protecting wildlife in Thailand. OurLand was founded in 2015 as one of Thailand's first privately managed wildlife reserves. The non-profit organization is located at the southern tip of Thailand's Western Forest Complex and Salakphra Wildlife Sanctuary. This region is heavily impacted by habitat loss, degradation, and human-wildlife-conflict. Tj remarked that it was great to "...get experience working directly with an actual non-profit, which looks great on a resume." Tj and his team established a plan to set up an ecovillage in the region and developed marketing and financial strategies for OurLand. In addition, everyone looked at different ways they could potentially expand internationally to protect other wildlife corridors and general biodiversity around the world. Tj said, "in college, we tend to come up with a lot of good ideas and postulate them, but this (internship) is something that provides real-world problem-solving." He followed by saying, "...and to have the opportunity to do it with an international nonprofit is something that will really set you apart from everyone else in your field."

# STUDENT CONFERENCES

## Lessons From Abroad Conference

### From Student Attendee to Conference Chair – Interview with Katherine Grego by William Harper

I had the opportunity to sit down virtually with the LFA Southeastern Conference chair, Katherine Grego, and discuss the two-day virtual 2020 Lessons From Abroad Conference and what it means to her. Katherine was the Study Abroad Coordinator for the Center for Global Engagement. LFA is a conference held for recent returnees of study abroad programs, to give them a place to unpack their stories and connect with students from several other institutions. During this event, students are given advice on how to incorporate their experiences into their resume's or job interviews. This conference also teaches what resources are available for students who want to return to live or work abroad. The conference also featured Dr. Ian Bond, a Columbus Rotarian, as the keynote speaker.

This year LFA took on a new look by moving onto the “Zoom” virtual platform due to the 2020 pandemic. The pandemic has caused major speed bumps for study abroad campuses worldwide, but this did not stop Katherine from being able to continue the conference tradition. As chair she clearly did her job well, with the amount of returning attendees, few hiccups in the conference, and adding a new session to the conference about “diversity and social justice abroad”. When asked about how the pandemic affected attendance, she explained that they were able to have participants from 14 different institutions across 4 different states in the U.S., because the online format made the information more accessible.

“While nearing graduation, I kept thinking, “what am I going to do with my geology degree”? After attending LFA as an undergraduate student, I realized my passion was in international education and quickly got my master's in education, which led me to my dream job at CSU. It has been a privilege to bring students to the conference over the years but one of my greatest professional achievements has been to lead the planning for LFA 2020 while providing students the same support I received all those years ago.” Students can learn more about their own adventures and what it truly means to go abroad from this conference. Clearly from the success of the conference and the positive evaluations given, Katherine did an amazing job as Southeastern Chair for LFA and should be recognized for making history by coordinating their first successful virtual conference.



## STUDENT CONFERENCES

### Georgia International Leadership Conference (GILC)

The Center for Global Engagement (CGE) was excited to have students participate in the annual Georgia International Leadership Conference, March 5-6. The CGE sponsored over 20 students to attend this virtual opportunity and to engage with other international students and study abroad alumni from around the state. The theme was "in waves of change; we find our direction." Vishwa Patel, an International Student from India, was selected to be a Peer Leader during the event. Katherine Grego, CGE Study Abroad Coordinator, was part of the conference planning committee and also presented two sessions, "Working in International Education" & "Connecting COVID & Culture Shock."





# Live from Rio de Janeiro: CAPOEIRA!

by William Harper  
International Studies Certificate Graduate



On October 28th, 2020 I had the chance to attend a virtual event on the demonstration of one of Brazil's historic martial arts forms called "Capoeira". This spectacular event was held by Pamela who works at an institution called "Campus B" based in Brazil. The campus provides experiential learning through offerings of virtual experiences, which is what we need during these times. Before the demonstration, we went through the exotic history of Capoeira. "Capoeira started as a form of 'Fight/Resistance' by African slaves over 500 years ago." - stated Pamela as she introduced the instructor. We learned how the slaves had no instruments to fight against their masters, so they created Capoeira in Brazil to fight back. Though interestingly enough, Capoeira is neither created from Portuguese or African, it originated from "Tupi". The meaning of the word is "forest", "round" and low vegetation which is where they would train or dance in this art form.

After the introduction, we were able to stand up and actively participate in Capoeira in a training session with the instructor. We learned very quickly that every Capoeira starts with a song. The reason for the song is because Capoeira is now a form of dance for their fighting stance! Capoeira now is used to practice martial arts in the form of dancing. One can quickly learn Capoeira and feel the importance of this tradition to Brazil's culture.

After this we were invited to watch a 2nd performance in which we learned about Patota do Galo. This event, held in Rio de Janeiro, demonstrated the importance of Capoeira and the important awareness of Rio de Janeiro. Students during this virtual event showed us what they have learned, including their first instruments. Capoeira showed the importance of the Brazilian historical culture and what it means to learn more about it. Even during the pandemic, this event showed that we can continue international learning through a virtual world.

## New International Partners

### Egypt: Ain Shams University



CSU established a new partnership with Ain Shams University in Cairo for its students to study computer science in Columbus (undergraduate and graduate) and to host future faculty-led study abroad programs with **Dr. Rania Hodhod, Assistant Chair and Associate Professor in the TSYS School of Computer Science.**

## Italy: Florence Classical Arts Academy



**Professor Christopher Whittey**, who is the Alan F. Rothschild Distinguished Chair of Art, established this studio art program for CSU students to study abroad for a semester or during the summer. The academy is located in a 19th-century Villa of the Bargioni family in the heart of Florence, Italy, with a didactic teaching programme based on the fundamental principles, methods and techniques of classical art, handed down over the centuries since the Italian Renaissance. The Florence Classical Arts Academy offers students the opportunity to experience the dynamic life in Florence and Tuscany, studying traditional techniques of drawing and painting with academic instruction, in studios designed and equipped to professional standards.

### See Our New Virtual Opportunities

**Global Learning Collective:** <https://glcollective.org/internship/>

**Campus B:** <https://campusb.org/virtual/>

**CIS Abroad:** <https://www.cisabroad.com/programs/type/virtual-internship/>

**Anglo** - <https://angloeducational.com/internships-and-academic-programmes/programmesvirtual-internship-programme/#included>

## Farewell... or instead... see you later!

### Katherine Grego leaves CSU

It is bittersweet, but the CGE said goodbye to a close colleague, Ms. Katherine Grego, who moved to ISEP Exchange as a University Relations Manager for the U.S. West and East Pacific regions on July 8th. Katherine was of enormous support to the CGE over the past decade. She was a study abroad student in Japan as a CSU undergraduate and later served as a student employee with CSU's American Cross-Cultural Experience (ACCE) Program. Katherine then became a graduate assistant while working on her Master's degree in higher education. Katherine officially joined the CSU staff three years ago to serve as the coordinator of study abroad. Study abroad and its related programs in the International Studies Certificate Program and the International Learning Community could not have grown without her talent and passion for international education. While at CSU, Katherine took on leadership roles with the Georgia International Leadership Conference and Lessons from Abroad state and national conferences. Good luck, Katherine, on this career promotion! We are very happy for you, but we will miss you!



### The Return to Oxford

CSU will return to its programming and academics at the Spencer House in Oxford, England in the fall semester of 2021!







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