

Friends of Davis International Center of Princeton University

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Creating Understanding through Conversation and Friendship

President's Corner



The volunteers of **Friends of Davis International Center** have been busy this year helping hundreds of international graduate students, visiting scholars and their wives practice English and become more comfortable living in the United States.

As a result of the generous gift from the Davis family to the International Center, the expenses for the Friends' English conversation and host programs are now covered by the Davis International Center. In the future, any donations received by the Friends will be used to fund the following: the annual *Excellence in Teaching Award*, the printing and mailing of the semi-annual newsletter, and the development of new programs.

I wish to thank our donors and volunteers for their generous help in time and money as we continue to foster friendship and understanding among nations.

Alison Hankinson, President

Conversation Students Sponsor 'Atypical' Book Club

The Kite Runner, *Color of Water*, *Water for Elephants*, *The Glass Castle*. Sounds like a typical book club reading list. But this club is anything but 'typical,' because it is comprised of individuals from China, Germany, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine, and all are practicing their English through the Friends' Group English Conversation Program.

Started by tutor **Ilse Lazovick**, the club now organizes its own meetings every six weeks to discuss impressions, feelings, and difficulties the members face in reading the books in English. As participant **Helga Wellhoefer** explains, "With our different backgrounds, the discussions bring a perspective that is driven by our diverse cultures."

Students Take Guided Tours of Princeton Community

Anne Bolick and **Fleurette Wallach**, tutors in the Group English Conversation Program, have organized local tours for students participating in the program to help them get to know the community better.

Thus far, there have been three tours: the Orange Key tour of the Princeton campus; Morven, the historic home of former New Jersey governors; and Princeton University Art Museum.

Despite the winter weather, the students enjoyed the tours, especially the art museum, where docents treated them to the Eastern, African, and West European collections. Several students lingered after the tour and spoke of returning. One student, **Salla Vainio** from Finland, found the museum so interesting that she took her husband and five-year old son back there within two days. More tours are planned for the spring.

Vietnamese Couple Adjust to U.S. - No Longer Homesick

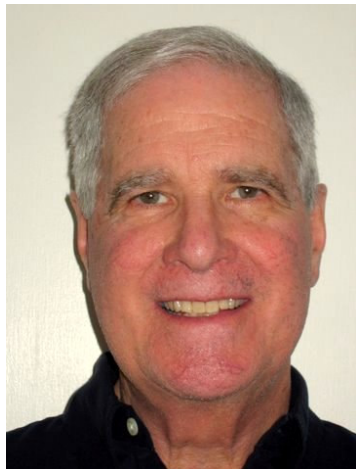
Nguyen Huynh Minh Tam from Vietnam is here with his wife **Nguyen Thi Hong Linh**, a visiting scholar in applied mathematics. In Saigon, Tam was a lecturer at the Post and Telecommunication Institute of Technology. In Princeton, he studies English with the Friends' Group Conversation Program; he and his wife also enjoy the hospitality of their host family, **Shahla** and **Eberhard Wunderlich**.



Nguyen Huynh Minh Tam

Tam enjoys both programs: "I have many new friends from around the world. I am an arm chair traveler because in just a few weeks of being in the group program, I learned about other cultures which I knew nothing about. My wife and I have adapted to our life here very quickly. We are not homesick any more."

Carl Clough—A Busy Volunteer



Carl Clough has been a volunteer for Friends of Davis International Center since 2004 when he began tutoring **Julio Cacho-Diaz**, a graduate student from Mexico.

In addition to being an individual tutor, Carl became a tutor in the Group English Conversation Program. Now he serves as chair of the individual tutoring program, which boasts 100 tutors who help international students and spouses practice English. “We need more tutors for next fall,” notes Carl. “Anyone interested should call **Hanna Hand** at (609) 258-1170.”

Before his retirement, Carl served as Vice President and Help Desk Manager for the North American offices of Mizuho Corporate Bank, one of Japan’s largest banks. “Bank reorganization would have put me in World Trade Tower 2 in mid-October 2001, so I narrowly missed being where twenty-six bank employees died on 9/11.”

After retiring, Carl also began volunteering for Princeton HealthCare, Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey, and the Red Cross. He especially likes his work with the Friends. “I greatly enjoy learning about international students and their lives and cultures. I am also hoping to combat the ‘Ugly American’ image.”

In addition to his active volunteer schedule, Carl is busy with his family, which includes three married sons and six grandchildren. He and his wife Gail love to travel and to spend time at their summer home in the Adirondacks on the same property where he spent much of his youth.

Help the Friends Save Money

Let the Friends e-mail you our future newsletters so we can save mailing costs. If you agree, send your approval to **Hanna Hand** at hhand@princeton.edu.

Visit us on the web
princeton.edu/icfriends

Friends’ Students Interviewed on Local TV Channel

Several spouses of international graduate students at Princeton University were interviewed on Princeton Community Television’s Channel 30 by **Linda Sipprille**, a Friends’ tutor and board member. Participating in the February interview were **Van Tran** from Vietnam, **Goezde Uktem** from Turkey, **Olga Polyanskaya** from Russia, and **Anne Bolick**, a tutor and former president of Friends of Davis International Center.

During the interview, the students spoke about their appreciation for the help they receive from the Friends’ volunteers. They especially enjoy the friendship and assistance offered by the tutors and hosts in helping them get settled in Princeton.

When asked what they have learned about other cultures, **Goezde** explained that before the English conversation program she thought all Asian cultures were similar. “Now I know better.” **Van** answered that she enjoyed talking after class with other students about career goals: “After all, we don’t want to be only housewives!” All were impressed with the friendliness of Americans. In Russia, many people are “gloomy,” notes **Olga**.

Anne spoke about Friends of Davis International Center, which currently has over 150 volunteers who offer English language practice and a host family program to more than 200 participants.



Participants in the Princeton Community Television interview: (L. to R.): Van Tran (Vietnam), Goezde Uktem (Turkey), tutors Linda Sipprille and Anne Bolick, and Olga Polyanskaya (Russia).

To Contact the Friends. . .

To become a volunteer or learn more about the Friends, call **Hanna Hand**, (609) 258-1170, or e-mail her at hhand@princeton.edu.