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*International students attend the first International Student Orientation and received welcome baskets from community members.*

## A home away from home: *International students warmly welcomed*

by Emily Liu

The Office of International Affairs is committed to collaborating with other departments and offices to provide the best services and programs possible to our international students and scholars. We encourage our international students to get involved by attending events, participating in workshops and programs, and joining student organizations. We support international students with high-quality cultural and social services, including cultural adjustment, immigration process assistance, academic integration, and professional and personal growth.

### Meet our new director of International Affairs

Emily Liu became the new director of International Affairs on June 13, 2022, bringing 19 years of working experience in international education to the Shepherd campus community. Emily is looking forward to building on her relationships across

campus to help streamline the process of the services for international students, making it more accessible for students and easier for everyone involved. If you haven't met Emily yet, please feel free to stop by her office at Gardiner Hall 127.

### First formalized International Student Orientation

On August 19, Shepherd welcomed 13 new international students from 12 countries for Fall 2022 and hosted an extensive orientation for them. Members of the campus community covered a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, student success, advising, campus safety and security, student activities, counseling, information and technology services, and immigration regulations. Members of the local community donated a welcome basket for each student.

**Dr. Ann Marie Legreid**

*Chair, Internationalization Advisory Council*

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*Top: Students gather to enjoy Bonfire Night.  
Bottom: First International Coffee Hour and birthday celebration*

### **First Welcome Reception for new and returning international students**

On September 14, we hosted the first Welcome Reception for international students. The campuswide event provided an early opportunity for newly arrived internationals to integrate with the University community. Twenty-eight international students, faculty, and staff attended the event. Dr. Kelly Hart, vice president for enrollment management, provided welcome remarks, and members of Global Shepherd Students also welcomed our new students and presented during the event.

### **Bonfire Night for international students**

We had a Bonfire Night on September 17 sponsored by the local community members. Some international students had a first-time bonfire party, roasting hotdogs over the fire and marshmallows for s'mores! Eating, singing, dancing, meeting friends from the local community—so much fun!

### **Bimonthly International Coffee Hour & monthly birthday celebration**

Starting on September 23, the International Coffee Hour is offered every other Friday in the international lounge. It is an excellent opportunity to meet students worldwide and explore the world at Shepherd through coffee, culture, and conversation. The event is open to all members of the Shepherd community, including international and U.S. students, faculty, and staff.

On Friday, September 23, the first International Coffee Hour was held to celebrate international students' September birthdays. Birthday girls/boys shared their life experiences in the U.S. Everyone got a share of the birthday cake and enjoyed the birthday party!

### **Optional Practical Training workshop**

On September 28, Emily Liu, director of International Affairs, and Mary Beth Myers, success coach, presented the first Optional Practical Training (OPT) workshop to international students. The OPT workshop is for F-1 students planning to work off-campus after graduation to learn the details of the OPT application process. OPT allows F-1 students to get work authorization for off-campus employment related to their field of study. We had 12 international students at the workshop, which was a great turnout. We received many good questions.

We will have OPT workshops every semester and expect May 2023 graduates to attend the next OPT workshop in early February if you missed this one. All interested students must attend an OPT workshop before applying for OPT.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are an international student graduating in Fall 2022, you may start applying for OPT right now. If you have any reservations regarding graduation for Fall 2022 semester, please do not apply for OPT until after semester-end grades have been posted.

Visit, take pictures, and let us know about your fun time in the U.S. or Shepherd University.

Hey, international students! We'd love to have you featured in our newsletter! Send us pictures of your fun time at Shepherd University or fun places you have visited, like restaurants, sites, museums, different cities, states, etc., and we will include them in our future newsletters.

**Opportunities to get connected and be involved!  
A home away from home! ■**

## **New foreign language policy** by Dean Robert Tudor and Dr. Mary Ellzey

Shepherd University's Department of English and Modern Languages worked closely with the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the registrar to create a new foreign language placement policy that benefits our students and incentivizes them to continue their language studies. The idea came from a desire that every incoming student should have an easy and affordable way to assess their current level of proficiency with one or more foreign languages taken prior to studying at Shepherd, that they should be awarded credit for previous languages taken if they meet conditions, and that all students should be encouraged to continue to develop proficiency in foreign languages and global cultures.

The previous foreign language testing procedure

was a cumbersome eight-step process. While all incoming students were encouraged to take the assessment, very few took advantage of it. The new process allows students to go to one page, access the assessment portal, and take the test quickly and easily. Once they receive their score and qualify to place into a higher level of foreign language study, register for that next level, and earn a grade of B or higher, at the completion of that course, the student will receive college credit of the lower level of foreign language they tested out of. Dr. Rob Tudor, dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences said, "It's a great incentive for Shepherd students to pick up where they left off with their language education. It presents an opportunity to pursue a minor in a foreign language, or double major

in a language with greater ease, and receive credits for knowledge they gained before they came to Shepherd." Dr. Betty Ellzey, chair of the Department of English and Modern Languages shared, "We have enjoyed the highest enrollment ever in Spanish classes this fall!"

All students who have taken a year or more of Spanish, French, or German prior to entering Shepherd should take the University Foreign Language Placement Test before registering for classes. However, they can take the test at any time, but they must take it before they have started language classes at Shepherd. Even if a chosen major does not require a foreign language, French, German, and Spanish 203 and 204 can be used as humanities credits in the Core Curriculum. ■





## Phi Beta Delta Honor Society *call for nominations*

Nominations are being accepted for membership in Shepherd University's Theta Epsilon Chapter of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. Membership is open to undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members who have demonstrated excellent performance in at least one of the following categories: international education, international exchange, internationalization initiatives, or the promotion of global understanding and respect at Shepherd University or in other settings. Candidates approved by the chapter's executive board will be invited to participate in the annual induction ceremony. (The GPA minimum for undergraduate students is 3.2, and for graduate students 3.5.)

Phi Beta Delta was established in 1986 at California State University at Long Beach. The society sponsors an annual conference, newsletter, webinars, and professional research

publication, and is a member of the Association of College Honor Societies.

The new member fee is \$60 for staff and faculty and \$50 for currently enrolled students; the fee includes the first year of membership, a certificate, the Phi Beta Delta medallion, and the national newsletter, refereed publication, and webinars. Lifetime membership is available for \$300 through the national office at [www.phibetadelta.org](http://www.phibetadelta.org). The 2023 induction ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 3:30 p.m., Student Center Storer Ballroom.

Contact Ann Marie Legreid, campus coordinator for Phi Beta Delta, for the nomination form by email at [alegreid@shepherd.edu](mailto:alegreid@shepherd.edu) or phone at 304-876-5332. The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, February 1, 2023. All nominations are reviewed by the Society's Executive Board, Dr. Aart Holtslag, president. ■



## A rare royal experience

Her Majesty Queen Sonja of Norway and Norway's Ambassador to the U.S. Anniken Krutnes were honored guests at the recent opening of two new facilities in Minnesota. Queen Sonja cut ribbons for the new archive at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, a repository of Norwegian and Norwegian-American history, and Norway House Innovation and Culture Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Norway House will serve as a venue for meetings, conferences, and special exhibits and where Norwegian entrepreneurs can incubate their businesses and test American markets. Ann Marie Legreid was invited as a member of the

Board of Directors of the Norwegian-American Historical Association. The Association has worked collaboratively with St. Olaf College and Norway House to plan these new facilities and is now engaged in a capital campaign for the archive. St. Olaf College, a private liberal arts institution, was founded in 1874 by immigrants from Norway. Today it is known for its Scandinavian Studies and Global Semester programs and its world-renowned music programs. Most students participate in Global Semester (study abroad) and the college is host to a large number of international students. ■



## Shepherd Students *celebrate Diwali/Tihar*

The Diwali/Tihar Hindu festival was observed at Shepherd University on the evening of Tuesday, October 25. International student Sujata Sharma from Nepal sang the traditional prayer and summarized the high points of Hindu mythology and festival traditions. Attendees created colorful paintings known as rangoli at several campus locations, and enjoyed an assortment of ethnic foods, music, and dance.

Diwali is a religious Festival of Lights celebrated over five days by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, and some Buddhists, especially Newar Buddhists. Also known as Deepavali, it is India's most important festival of the year. Celebrations begin two days before and end two days after the new moon day of Kartika in the lunisolar calendar. The festival is called Tihar in Nepal and the Indian states of Sikkim and West Bengal, which house a large number of ethnic Nepali people.

The festival is characterized by indoor and outdoor floral decorations and oil lamps (diya), colorful paintings (rangoli), family feasts, the sharing of gifts and sweets, singing and dancing, worship ceremonies, light fireworks, and indoor decorations in front of an altar. The festival is "a time to celebrate the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil." The festival celebrates Lord Rama's triumph over the evil spirit, Ravana. The traditional greeting, "Happy Diwali/Tihar," wishes happiness, prosperity, and joy to the receiver. Diwali/Tihar is a time of togetherness and goodwill with the ageless message...good can triumph over evil.

The event was sponsored by the Office of International Affairs, Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars, and the Multicultural Student Association. ■







## Study Abroad *builds momentum*

Study abroad has returned to Shepherd following COVID. In 2022, one student studied abroad in the Spring (Salzburg College, Austria), and three students did individual study abroad programs in the summer (True Spanish Experience/CESUGA University, A Coruña, Spain, American College of Greece, Athens, and University College Cork, Ireland). Two students received Gilman Scholarships to support their study abroad experiences. Four students are currently studying abroad in Greece (American College of Greece), Spain (University of Granada), England (University of Portsmouth), and Scotland (University of the West of Scotland). Majors represented include economics, elementary education, global studies, political science, and Spanish. Faculty-led trips also resumed with the Celtic Roots trip in the summer of 2022.

Students interested in upcoming individual programs can contact Dr. Greene at [sgreene@shepherd.edu](mailto:sgreene@shepherd.edu). Programs are still accepting students for Spring 2023, Summer 2023, and beyond. Faculty-led trips for Summer 2023 will be announced in November.

### Cooperation agreements

Shepherd has signed cooperation agreements with ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Switzerland and Hochschule Mittweida in Germany. The agreements include undergraduate and possibly graduate exchange as well as the possibility of faculty and staff collaboration and double degree programs. The ZHAW program offers the opportunity for student exchanges in computer science, engineering, data analytics, aviation, and some business programs. The program in Mittweida offers exchange possibilities in business, global studies, political science/political communication, and communication, as well as German language. ■



## International Education Week— *November 14-18*

International Education Week will be celebrated at Shepherd University on Wednesday, November 16, with "A Taste of the World." The event will include informational displays in the Student Center Rumsey Room from 1-3 p.m., representing the offices of Study Abroad and International Affairs, the global studies and geography programs, Spanish, Global Appalachia, and Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. Geography

Awareness Week is celebrated globally the same week. From 3:30-4:30 p.m., there will be a CPT Workshop in the Student Center Potomac Room, and from 4-5 p.m., an International Coffee Hour in Gardiner 120. Recognized across the country as "an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide," International Education Week is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of State. ■





## News Bytes

Shepherd University recently hosted **World Affairs Seminar**, bringing more than a hundred area high school students to campus for a day of presentations and discussions on the topic of social media. The event was co-sponsored by the Rotary clubs of Shepherdstown and Martinsburg and Phi Beta Delta Honor Society.

The **Global Studies B.A.** program has undergone a revamping in response to last year's program review. The proposed changes are moving through the curricular review process.

**Dr. Ann Marie Legreid presented a paper at Norway-America Seminar XIV** in Hamar, Norway in June and then participated in the "Arts and Industries" tour through southern Norway. She presented a case study of the Trane Company, its human ingenuity and identity, from immigrant industry to multinational corporation. James and Reuben Trane, with a combined 28 patents, pioneered HVAC technologies, deicing technology for aircraft, and lightweight construction of military fighter planes for the second World War.

**The Shepherd University Forensics and Debate Team** got off to a roaring start at its first competition of the year. The team captured second place in the team sweepstakes competition, receiving more than 20 final placements. The tournament was held at Bloomsburg University. Shepherd University hosted the Collegiate Forensic Fall Tournament on November 4-5, with the Shepherd team competing against seven other universities. Shepherd had an excellent showing with numerous finalists and several award winners. ■

## Dr. Holley Ralston: *No stranger to international programs*

Dr. Holley Ralston is no stranger to international programs and internationalization. In her capacity as an educator at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College (BRCTC), she enriches her classroom with her abundance of global knowledge and experiences. She teaches or has taught international relations, Spanish I and II, intercultural understanding, and world history. Last year, she was inducted into Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. In her administrative role at BRCTC, she is building bridges to help students transfer smoothly to four-year institutions, especially to Shepherd University. She would like to see stronger and more vibrant ties between the two institutions and, in that effort, she is leading discussions for a possible 2+2 articulation agreement with Shepherd in Global Studies.

Dr. Ralston's academic background is dominated by international themes and experiences. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from West Virginia Wesleyan College with a major in international studies. During this time, she spent a semester in Guanajuato, Mexico, to learn Spanish, for which she received 12 credits at Wesleyan. After she graduated,

she spent another four months in Querétaro, Mexico, to teach English. Subsequently, she embarked on a Master of Arts at West Virginia University in foreign language, which included Latin American and peninsular culture, literature, history, and language. During that time, she completed an academic year in Valladolid, Spain, where she also taught English to university students. Finally, she spent eight years in Germany, working toward her doctorate in political science at the Free University of Berlin. There she received magna cum laude on her dissertation on the topic of "State/Laender Environmental Partnerships in Global Governance for Sustainable Development." This work has been converted into a book and published by the renowned academic publisher Edward Elgar, Inc., with the title "Subnational Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Transatlantic Cooperation between the United States and Germany."

She has also had some work experience with global issues. At Germanwatch, an NGO in Bonn and Berlin, Germany, she published a case study on the effects of climate change on the atoll island of Tuvalu in the South Pacific. This is a human rights issue regarding



environmental refugees and justice. In addition, as part of a project at the Free University of Berlin, she put together the briefing books for the Transatlantic Urban Climate Dialogue, which was a collaboration between cities in the United States, Canada, and Germany to exchange knowledge on innovative programs.

We salute our friends at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College for their work in promoting global understanding and respect. Salute! ■





## Lessons Learned – *A transformational experience in Africa*

Dr. LeAnn Johnson, associate professor of education and coordinator of the Master of Arts in Teaching Program at Shepherd University, is currently on sabbatical in Kenya where she is deeply involved in numerous projects at Daystar University. She described her life as “super, super busy.” To mention only a few of her activities, she is teaching two sections of a special education course for Daystar teacher candidates whereby she is helping her students transition from theory to practice at a local public primary school. She took those students on a field trip to a disability assessment center in Machakos, where they observed a residential and day program for individuals with severe disabilities. Beyond that, she is teaching a series of seven

workshops on pedagogy in higher education for Daystar faculty at the Nairobi campus.

Dr. Johnson was invited to do a plenary session in the South Sudan Research Ethics Conference hosted by Shepherd University in collaboration with the Kenyan research approval office and UNESCO. She wrote of her experience: “I delivered a plenary session in which I was asked to broaden the discussion beyond just research ethics to how ethics impacts professionals in all areas of their responsibilities. I did this by personifying the roles of researcher, teacher, grant writer, and administrator as if they were people, and presenting decisions that each had to make in situations where policy wasn’t black

and white. My main theme was that when we are trying to make ethical decisions when operating in gray areas related to each of our professional roles, we have to ask ourselves if our actions will have a positive outcome, if we are willing to own our actions and whether our actions will allow us to sleep at night. I got lots of positive feedback from conferees because they could really relate to Dr. Researcher, Ms. Teacher, Madam Author, and Mr. Policy Maker and the daily decisions that are made in these various roles.”

Her adventures in Kenya also involve research. She is working collaboratively on a series of three studies examining the impact of media messaging about disabilities in edutainment





episodes designed for 8- to 10-year-old children in sub-Saharan Africa. Her co-researchers are Dr. Dina Borzekowski, director of the Global Health Initiative and research professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health at the University of Maryland; Dr. A.L. Lando head of the Daystar Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies at Daystar; and the Ubongo Production Company.

Dr. Johnson is also “facilitating an in-person weekly gathering group of individuals living in Athi River to take Pathway Connect 101 and 102 through Brigham Young University-Idaho.” She wrote: “It looks like we will have 13-15 students taking these classes which build mathematics, writing, and life/professional skills necessary to matriculate into a university program leading to a bachelor’s degree to improve their employment options.”

For students at Shepherd, she has identified dates for Zoom cultural exchanges between Daystar education majors and Shepherd’s teacher candidates. For a future summer session, she is exploring the logistics of taking Shepherd students to Kenya.

Dr. Johnson was asked to comment on her “biggest surprise” in spending a semester in Kenya. Registration for the semester does not begin until the Friday before classes start. Consequently, they have no idea how many sections of classes will be needed at the beginning of the semester. I was told that the first three weeks many changes would be made and that it was always difficult when you were asked to suddenly pick up another class three weeks into the semester. I couldn’t really believe that could happen until two weeks into the semester when I was asked to pick up another class. The syllabus was a bare outline of global topics, the textbook listed was from 1986 and the library only had one copy of it. Students do not have the funds to buy textbooks so they are supposed to use the books provided by the library. I had three days to create a more detailed syllabus, set up expectations for assignments, and find online readings to support each topic. I then taught for two weeks and found that my third class landed on a holiday, the university would be closed, and I needed to revise my course outline again. Flexibility is paramount to survival.

### What has been “the greatest challenge” in making the transition to life in Kenya?

English language use. All public sector work and education is done in English, but the country is officially bilingual with people also speaking Swahili. There are also 41 tribes each with their own unrelated language. The typical child grows up speaking their tribal language with some Swahili mixed in. Then at age four they go to



school where everything is taught in English. I have spent a lot of time talking to public school teachers and administrators about student acquisition of English and have been repeatedly told that there is no problem. However, as I’ve worked with my college students who want to become teachers, there are substantial gaps in their own English proficiency that goes well beyond academic writing. So the question becomes, if someone with less than fluent English proficiency is the one teaching those young children in English, how then do those students gain English proficiency? I’m just now reaching the point where I can have honest conversations with Kenyan professors about this and I’m now finding that under all the initial reassurances I was given, there is significant conversation and concern about this very topic. When we talk about an English class, we are thinking about a class that improves writing and comprehension of literature. When they talk about an English class, they think of it as English as a second language.

### What are some of the lessons learned that you might use in your classroom here at Shepherd?

#1 Appreciation for our work load. Faculty here teach 21 credits a semester in addition to expectations for research and service. Average class sizes are well over 40 students. I just talked to an instructor who has 86 students in one section of an ENGL 101 equivalent class that she teaches as part of her 21 credit load.

#2 The critical role that learning about our students’ personal experiences play in our ability to build on those experiences as we teach. With the significant differences between my own background and that of my students, we do a lot of exploration regarding use of phrases, experiences, and expectations.

#3 That communication is a negotiated process that may require multiple exchanges to reach understanding of what the other is trying to say.

#4 The importance of kindness and patience when things don’t go well. On day one of my first class, the electrical socket was hanging out of the wall and I had to request help from IT. Then halfway through the class, the electrical box they used started an ear piercing squeal and then started emitting a burning smell. I evacuated the class outside, reported it to IT, and continued to teach outside without my slide show. They got it fixed and we returned to class. The second week, we had a repeat performance. This time I taught with all my students sitting on the stairs outside the building until another professor ended her class early and invited us to finish in her classroom. The third week when it happened, I simply unplugged everything and we finished class with just the use of the whiteboard.

#5 Flexibility—See #4 ■



## Celtic Roots Global Appalachia plans focus on Ulster Ireland and Cornwall for 2023

Celtic Roots Global Appalachia is a global studies experience at Shepherd University that allows students and the community to explore their Celtic Roots, either through travel study or a semester abroad in the Interdisciplinary B.A./B.S. or M.A. partnership degree program with the University of the West of Scotland. The 2023 Celtic Roots course (APST 430/530) and travel practicum (APST 431/531) will take travelers to Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall to explore places associated with the Celtic Roots course: Ring of Kerry, Rock of Cashel, Dublin and the Easter Rising, Celtic Twilight of Yeats and Lady Gregory, Ulster Irish heritage of Appalachians at the Belfast Ulster Museum, and the ancient Celtic world of Glastonbury, Tintagel, and the mystical St. Michael's Mount and St. Ives in Cornwall. Students will follow the literary footsteps and legends of King Arthur and the Mists of Avalon, the great Irish writers W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge, James Joyce, and Oscar Wilde, and English writers Virginia Woolf and Jane Austen associated with Cornwall and the South Downs. While students do not have to travel with the June 12-25, 2023, tour group, they will be able to explore the history, literature, art, and culture of Gaelic Ireland and Cornwall. Shepherd students interested in the course and tour should contact Dr. Sylvia Shurbutt, Center for Appalachian Studies and Communities. ■



## IAC strategic planning progress report

For the past year, the Internationalization Advisory Council (IAC) has been engaged in strategic review and planning of international initiatives on the Shepherd campus. A SWOT analysis/environmental scan was drafted last year with input from IAC members. Last spring, small groups drafted strategies and metrics to update the five goals of the original plan. Group

members included Drs. Sylvia Shurbutt, Sam Greene, Keith Alexander, Marat Akopian, Richie Stevens, Kelly Hart, Kathleen Reid, Dawne Burke, and Ann Marie Legreid (chair). The draft document was shared with the full IAC this fall and the intent is to finalize the plan this academic year. ■