



# OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL & NATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

## OINSEP 2023-2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

What is the value of global cultural immersion experiences to students and to SC State University? The return on investment for these overseas experiential learning opportunities is significant. Students develop skills that are valued in the workplace while facilitating personal growth and development. A cultural immersion trip is not a vacation--students gain academic credits. Cultural immersion also helps the University achieve its mission of preparing "competent and socially aware graduates to enable them to work and live productively in a dynamic, global society."

The Office of International and National Student Exchange Programs (OINSEP) has taken students to Costa Rica, France, Holland, Greece, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, and Kenya. Those trips were transformative educational experiences, which reflect our commitment to broadening students' perspectives and fostering their personal and professional growth.

On cultural immersion trips students learn to embrace cultural diversity. The experiences enhance students' maturity and readiness for new challenges. Returning students often demonstrate increased cultural competence, making them more attractive to employers. Cultural immersion allows direct interaction with local communities, participation in cultural events, and firsthand insights into diverse cultures. This kind of experiential learning promotes empathy, breaks down stereotypes, and encourages language acquisition, and a lifelong passion for global understanding.

[Continued on page 2]



**Left:** Students on the top deck of a glass bottom boat on their way to the Buccoo Reef in Tobago during a cultural immersion trip (Nov. 2023). **Right:** Madison (seated) is being prepared to enter the Rastafarian Nyabinghi Temple in Siparia on a cultural immersion trip to Trinidad (Nov. 2023).



**Left:** Eunice Eleke holds a new found friend at the Castara Pre-School in Castara, on a cultural immersion trip to Tobago (Nov. 2023). **Right:** Jayvion Snow stands next to a worker plucking tea leaves on a tea farm in Meru, on a cultural immersion trip to Kenya (May 2024).



**Left:** Bryce Scott hangs out with a Masai man in his hut near Amboseli National Park on a cultural immersion trip to Kenya (May 2024). **Right:** A Masai compound in Kenya (May 2024).

# INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS MONTH 2023

Each November, South Carolina State University celebrates International Awareness Month. This tradition recognizes the diversity of the countries of origin represented on campus by international students, faculty, and staff. Bulldogs come from at least 25 nations around the globe. This diversity enriches the cultural environment on campus and fosters a rich exchange of ideas. It also stimulates a desire for students to visit other countries for cultural immersion.

The official kick-off event for International Awareness Month occurred on November 9, 2023, with the Parade of Nations. This is a procession of national flags carried by scores of students including Delano Whitfield, Mr. SCSU (below left). The Marching 101 Band (below center) provided stirring music and led the parade from in front of the MLK Auditorium where students retrieved the flags before the march to the Student Plaza. This event is always colorful and festive.



## Message from the Director cont'd

Living abroad, even briefly, as is the case with the week-long cultural immersion trips sponsored by OINSEP, enhances students' resilience, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability, essential qualities for success in today's interconnected world. Students gain a more nuanced understanding of other cultures because of their interactions with residents of another country.

Cultural immersion also helps students develop the skills of reflection and analysis. It stimulates their desire to learn another language, and facilitates the acquisition of language skills. In sum, cultural immersion experiences (three trips are featured in this publication) instill valuable skills and perspectives that prepare students to thrive in their personal and professional lives.

Dr. Learie B. Luke, Director



**Left:** Eric Byrd learns how to make Batik on a cultural immersion trip to Ghana (July 2023).



**Right:** A staff member cooks food in an outdoor kitchen for the students at the Divine Kids Academy (DKA) in Jukwa, Ghana (July 2023).



**Left:** SCSU students and tour guides interact with kids from Sefwi village in Jukwa during a cultural immersion trip to Ghana. Many of the kids attend the DKA. The DKA needs financial support to better serve these students.



**Right:** Dr. Ruth Hodges donates books to the Principal and Chairman of the DKA.

# CONNECTING WITH OUR ROOTS IN GHANA

OINSEP and the College of Business joined hands on a cultural immersion trip to Ghana from July 19-27, 2023. The trip connected three students (Kennedy Smith, Asia Crump, and Eric Byrd), Business faculty, OINSEP and other staff, as well as one alum to their roots on the continent of Africa.

The first major stop was at the W. E. B. Dubois Centre for Pan African Culture, which was quite an educational experience. The SCSU delegation also visited the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park and Mausoleum, built on the site where Nkrumah made the declaration of Ghana's independence.

Also on the itinerary was a visit to Cape Coast where the delegation went to the University of Cape Coast and signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate on teaching, student exchange, and research. In Cape Coast, the Bulldogs traced the paths their ancestors trod when they were brutally captured and sold into slavery. First, they visited the Assin Manso Slave River Site where the captives were housed briefly after a forced march from the interior. This is the place where they took their last bath in a river before taking the trek to the dungeons of the Cape Coast Castle where they were held before being transported to the New World. As the SCSU group stood at the "Door of No Return" in the castle, their hearts ached for their ancestors who took their last steps on the shores of Africa as they embarked on the months-long voyage to the Americas and the Caribbean.

While in Ghana, the Bulldogs visited the village of Sefwi in Jukwa and engaged in a naming ceremony performed by local elders and attended by the entire village. Each member of the SCSU team was given a Ghanaian name, which signified both the day on which the person was born as well as the character of the person. The ceremony, accompanied by African drumming and a bonfire, was one of the most significant experiences for the SCSU team.

Another thrilling experience was a visit to a local elementary school called the Divine Kids Academy. Many of the students there were from the village of Sefwi. The school is in need of financial support to ensure that the kids have a bright future. The SCSU delegation would like to help the students and the school and agreed to form the "Bulldogs 4 Jukwa" group to raise funds for the school. If you wish to support this effort and get more information, please contact Dr. Learie Luke at [lluke@scsu.edu](mailto:lluke@scsu.edu).



**Above:** Dr. Luke with a drum made in 1942 at the Naming Ceremony in Sefwi. **Below:** His Ghanaian name is seen on a certificate.



**Above:** Eric Byrd, Asia Crump, and a teacher stand in the classroom with students at the Divine Kids Academy (DKA).

**Below:** SCSU Team in an unfinished section of the DKA, which needs financial support.



**Above:** Asia Crump connects with her African roots by learning a Ghanaian dance at the Assin Manso Slave River Site in Cape Coast, Ghana.



**Above:** The SCSU team and other visitors at the Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast, Ghana

**Right:** Eric enjoys traditional Ghanaian food eaten in the traditional way with his hands.



# KENYA: SAFARI, ROSES, TEA, AND MORE!

Between May 12-21, 2024, OINSEP partnered with the Division of Public Service and Agriculture to take eight Ag-Scholars on a cultural immersion trip to Kenya. The purpose of the trip was to expose students to agricultural practices around the globe and to the people and cultures of other countries. This facilitates the development of a broad worldview and comparison of agricultural practices and agribusiness in the United States and Kenya. As part of the preparation for the trip, students took lessons in *Basic Conversational Swahili* taught by SCSU graduate students from Kenya and Tanzania. The students were also enrolled in the SA 300 *Cultural Immersion* course in Summer Session I taught by Dr. Luke.



**Above:** Elephants in Amboseli National Park  
**Below:** Two fish dishes flank a vegetarian dish in Kenya

During the trip, the students and chaperones visited a local tea farm and factory in Meru and a rose farm in Naivasha. They also visited the Bomas of Kenya where they experienced cultural performances from various ethnic groups in Kenya. The SCSU delegation also visited the United States International University Africa (USIU) with which SCSU has signed an MOU. The group also spent some time with and gave gifts to the students and staff at the Anduru Educational Centre, an elementary school in an impoverished section of the capital, Nairobi. One of the highlights of the trip was a meeting with Ryan Scott, Regional Agricultural Counselor of the USDA, who is stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi.



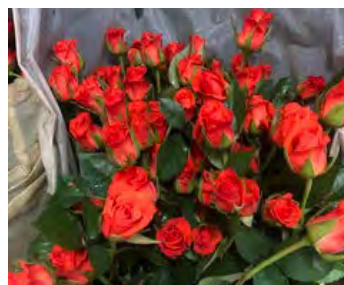
The SCSU delegation also visited the Amboseli National Park for a safari to see elephants, giraffe, antelopes, flamingos, and many more animals in their natural habit. The experience in Kenya was exhilarating!



Jessica (in green & khaki) & Dr. Luke (2nd from R) with the head chef (w/ red scarf), other chefs & kitchen staff at Kilima Safari Camp near Amboseli.



**Left:** Jessica Carswell with Masai men near Amboseli National Park in Kenya.  
**Center:** L-R: Bryce, Randall, Barry and Bianca at the Nairobi National Museum, in Kenya.  
**Right:** Randall Pickering participates in a cultural performance at the Bomas of Kenya, in Langata, Nairobi, Kenya.



SCSU delegation take pictures with staff in the cooling room of the flower farm in Naivasha, Kenya. Behind them are boxes of roses ready to be shipped to Holland.

Roses are inspected and graded at the flower farm in Naivasha before packaging.



**Above:** Dr. Thomas Nyatta plucks tea on the Tea Farm in Meru, Kenya.



**Right:** SCSU team holds gifts for students at the Anduru Educational Centre in Nairobi, Kenya.

# THE TRIP TO TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

South Carolina State University and Claflin University embarked on a cultural immersion trip to the twin-island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in November 2023. Ten students from SCSU, eight from Claflin, and their four chaperones had quite an adventure in the southern Caribbean on this joint venture.

On the island of Trinidad, the group visited the House of Angostura (which bottles the world-famous Angostura Bitters), and the University of the Southern Caribbean. The visitors also toured the town of Siparia to see the following cultural sites: the Daisy Voisin Hub, the Bingy Yard with members of the Nyabinghi Rastafarians, and Delpino Ranch (where the group had bread and roasted bake baked in a dirt oven and in a pot on an outdoor fire, did some fishing, had sugar cane, and went on a raft in a pond). They also traveled to the La Brea Pitch Lake in Brighton, where most of the world's asphalt is mined. The highlight of the visit in Siparia was hearing live steelpan music at the Deltones Panyard.

The excursion through Trinidad included a tour of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, photo ops in front of the Red House (the parliament building) and at the National Academy for the Performing Arts. They also stopped for coconut water around the Queens Park Savannah in the capital city of Port of Spain, and traveled to the Mount Saint Benedict Monastery, which is perched about 4,300 feet above sea level in St. Augustine, not far from the town of Curepe where they enjoyed Indian food at Juman's Roti Shop. They also tasted Creole (African-based) food at the Breakfast Shed in Port of Spain, as well as traditional corn soup in Siparia.

The group flew to the smaller island of Tobago for a few days where they visited the Dwight York Stadium and toured Fort King George which overlooks Tobago's main town, Scarborough. They also embarked on a trip to the coastal village of Castara along the winding North Coast Road with its exhilarating views of many villages and the Caribbean Sea. In Castara, they interacted with students from the Castara Pre-School and the Castara Primary School. From Castara they went on a tour of the town of Plymouth to see the Monument to the Courlanders, the Mystery Tombstone, and Fort James, from which they had an advantageous view of Turtle Beach, where nesting leatherback turtles come ashore each year.

The highlight of the tour of Tobago was the visit to the Buccoo Reef, the Nylon Pool (where people can stand in the middle of the ocean), and No Man's Land. Before leaving Tobago, the delegation had a drive-by tour of the Village of Buccoo and saw the stadium where goats and crabs race at Easter time. On this overseas trip, the students and chaperones had an all-round cultural immersion experience, which will remain with them for the rest of their lives.



SCSU/Claflin visit the campus of the University of the Southern Caribbean.



Students see firsthand how roasted bake was made traditionally outdoors in Trinidad when they visited Delpino Ranch in Siparia.



Emion and Danaysia fish while Nayelle sails on a raft in the pond at Delpino Ranch.



**Left:** Stephen and Treylen are happy at Delpino Ranch.

**Right:** Dajua takes a picture with her Rasta brothers at the Nyabinghi Temple in Siparia.



**Left:** Walking on the edge of the Pitch Lake in Brighton, Trinidad.

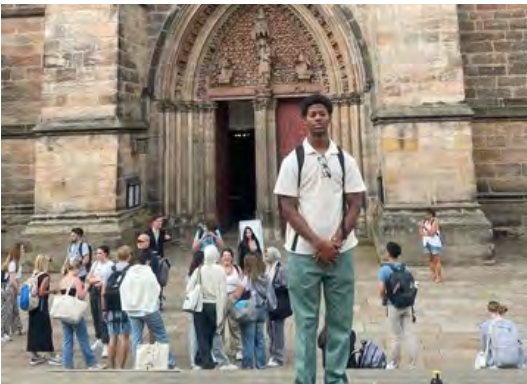
**Right:** The girls enjoy coconut water around the Queens Park Savannah in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

# Affiliation Agreements Lead Students to Europe

In April 2024 affiliation agreements were signed with two new study-abroad providers, Barcelona SAE and International Student Exchange Programs (ISEP). Barcelona SAE provides quality study abroad, internship, and customized programs for undergraduate students. Barcelona SAE was founded in 2009 by Rich Kurtzman, author of *Like a Fish In Water*. The organization features its award-winning TODOS (The Outcomes-Based Diversity Outreach Strategy) project, which focuses on the results/outcomes of diversity and inclusion measures designed to remove the barriers that keep students from underrepresented backgrounds from studying abroad. Through TODOS, Barcelona SAE offers the HBCU Consortium Initiative that provides support to HBCU partners through targeted engagement and program development for faculty, staff, and students. The HBCU Consortium is currently being spearheaded by Keyana Pugh, Assistant TODOS Coordinator, who played a major role in facilitating the connection between Barcelona SAE and SC State University. Dajanique Leysath was the first student to study with Barcelona SAE in summer 2024. Her program focused on “Black Barcelona” and Food and Culture in the Mediterranean.



Dajanique Leysath  
Summer 2024  
Barcelona, Spain

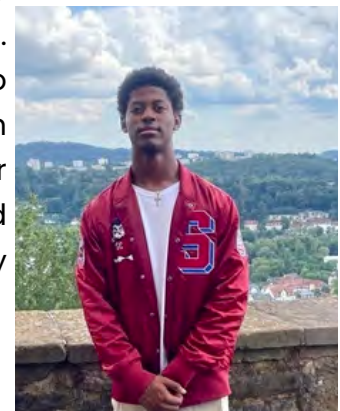


Josiah Stroman  
Summer 2024  
Marburg, Germany



OINSEP also signed an affiliation agreement with ISEP, which manages study abroad programs at 300 host institutions in various countries across the globe. ISEP is a non-profit organization founded over 40 years ago and has helped to internationalize over 60,000 students to date. Its mission is to break down financial and academic barriers in order to make study abroad accessible for all. Its core values are accessibility, diversity, affordability, quality, and collaboration. With ISEP, students have unmatched access to high-quality academic opportunities, authentic local experiences, and exceptional support.

In July 2024, Josiah Stroman, a sophomore Mechanical Engineering Technology major, was the first to study with ISEP in Marburg, Germany.



# NIGERIA INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE

In Fall 2023, the Nigerian students, faculty, their spouses, and friends hosted an International Showcase that was well attended and featured a wide variety of cultural items. The event was held in Belcher Hall on November 9, 2023. The program was co-hosted by professors Stanley Ihekweazu, Saliman Isa, Joseph Onyeocha, Florence Anoruo, and student Rejoice Anaele. The Nigerian and American national anthems were sung at the top of the program followed by greetings in various languages spoken in Nigeria.

The hosts provided an informative PowerPoint presentation entitled "Panorama of Nigeria," which helped the audience understand the vast country and diverse people of Nigeria. They also shared an engaging video of a traditional Nigerian wedding that captivated the attention of students.

The highlight of the event was a fashion show, which was a presentation of a dazzling array of colorful clothing made from a variety of fabrics. Attendees also had the privilege to touch and examine additional clothing on a rack, as well as sculpture and other artifacts on display.

No international showcase can be successful without food. The Nigerian faculty brought a wide assortment of savory dishes for the audience to sample. The Nigerians laid it all out on the plate! Jollof rice, coconut rice, puff puff, fried plantains, akara, moi moi, baked chicken, and chin chin were flavorful and satisfying.

The audience left the Nigerian International Showcase more knowledgeable about the country and people of Nigeria, and with a deeper appreciation for the diverse cultures on the continent of Africa. OINSEP is grateful for the time that the Nigerian students, faculty, spouses and their friends spent sharing their culture.



**Left:** Attendees sample fried plantains and other Nigerian foods.



**Right:** Nigerians and friends showcase traditional cultural attire.



**Left:** Mouth-watering baked chicken, jollof rice, akara, etc.



**Right:** Nigerian sculpture and other artifacts on display.

## STAFF CERTIFICATION

As OINSEP continues to take students across the globe on cultural immersion trips, the need to assess the effectiveness of those experiential learning experiences grow. Among other assessment tools, OINSEP uses Cultural Intelligence (CQ) assessments designed by the Cultural Intelligence Center to help determine the level of improvement in students' capability to navigate diverse cultural situations.

The CQ assessments are globally normed and rooted in rigorous academic research conducted across more than 100 countries. In February 2024, Dominique Rolle, International Education Coordinator, completed the CQ Certification Program and is now an official CQ Certified Facilitator and specialist in understanding the cultural intelligence model and research. Dr. Learie Luke secured his certification in July as well. Both are certified to administer CQ assessments by the Cultural Intelligence Center.

## VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

OINSEP offers monthly virtual workshops for students to drop in and learn about all aspects of "study away" programs (study abroad and cultural immersion) including funding opportunities for study abroad at SC State University. On February 23, 2024, the Office hosted the Benjamin A. Gilman Alumni Ambassador Metzlin Rodriguez (South Korea, 2021) to connect with students and provide helpful tips on submitting competitive applications for the Gilman scholarship, which can provide \$5,000 for study abroad. Interested students can attend the virtual workshops by registering for the events once they are announced via email each month.

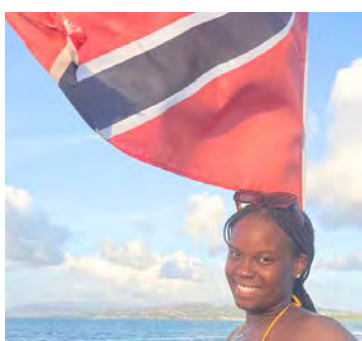
## FLAG QUIZ



#1: In which building on campus were these flag installed? #2: Identify the nine countries represented by the flags?



#3: The painted rocks **above** and **below** represent the flags of which countries in Africa?



#4: This flag is from which southern Caribbean nation?



Left: #5: The faculty member (face hidden), alum (holding the flag), and student (at base of flag) are visiting which African country?



#6: This alum and her mom are from which South American country?



# ORANGEBURG INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 2024

The inaugural Orangeburg International Festival was held on April 20, 2024 in downtown Orangeburg, SC. It attracted hundreds of visitors, showcasing global cultures and community spirit. The planning team included Councilwoman Latisha Walker from Orangeburg County and representatives from Claflin University, South Carolina State University, OC-TECH, the Downtown Orangeburg Revitalization Association (DORA), Orangeburg Country School District, Orangeburg Chamber of Commerce, and the Tiffany Grant Foundation.

At least fourteen students and faculty from SCSU volunteered at the festival and contributed to its success. The Orangeburg International Festival (OIF) began with a flag parade representing a number of countries accompanied by upbeat music and rhythmic drumming from the Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School Band. Participants in the parade proudly displayed their flags, which were loaned by the Office of International and National Student Exchange Programs at SCSU.

The festival featured a cultural mart with stalls from various nations, offering traditional crafts, artwork, and educational displays. The diversity was impressive, ranging from Kenyan Masai beadwork to Peruvian handwoven textiles. Live acts like Brazilian Samba, Indonesian Gamelan music, and Indian dances were also showcased. The OIF also showcased a diverse range of international cuisine, including Italian pastas, Thai curries, and French pastries, along with regional specialties like Shrimp and Grits. Long lines at booths reflected the high quality and popularity of the products. The 2024 Orangeburg International Festival offered an immersive experience celebrating cultural diversity through interactive activities like storytelling sessions, crafts workshops, and face painting. The festival concluded with a concert, bringing people from all backgrounds together to celebrate their common humanity in an electrifying atmosphere filled with joy and solidarity. A gallery of pictures can be found on the OIF Facebook page at <https://tinyurl.com/5ey2zwy8>.



**Left:** SCSU students at OIF 2024.  
**Right:** A student shows off Henna painting and a beautiful smile.



**L-R:** Dr. Susan Stein, Ms. Dominique Rolle, & Dr. Margaret Morris volunteer at OIF 2024.



Eunice Eleke gets a Henna painting at OIF 2024.



The Indian delegation at OIF 2024.



SCSU students, faculty, staff, and other volunteers at OIF 2024.

# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH 2023

Hispanic Heritage Month 2023 was celebrated at SCSU by hosting three events on October 12, 2023. First, a Mexican & Caribbean Drink Tasting was held in Belcher Hall during which the deliciously sweet and refreshing Mexican drink called Agua de Horchata along with the tantalizing Sorrel drink from the Caribbean were served to transport the taste buds to Latin American/Caribbean flavor heaven. Second, a Strike the Piñata event was held in Belcher Hall Lobby at which students participated by first answering questions about Latin America, and then striking a Piñata (after being blind-folded and spun around a few times). This event was educational and a lot of fun. The final event was a Salsa Dance Class in the Bulldog Lounge. Both novice and experienced dancers participated and had a great time. The students and faculty in the Foreign Language Program in the Department of English and Communications also set up posters featuring famous Latinos in Turner Hall as their way of celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.



Students and faculty learn how to dance Salsa in the Bulldog Lounge under the supervision from Instructor Christopher (in black t-shirt and light blue trousers) from the Esmeralda Dance Studio in Columbia.



Princess, Rejoice, Dr. Susan Stein, and two male students at the piñata event with the candy from the piñata on the table.



Sorrel drink is made from the bracts of the flowers of the sorrel plant. They are harvested (left) then dried (right). Dried sorrel is steeped in hot water, then the liquid is strained and mixed with sugar, cinnamon, hard spice, bay leaves, and cloves.

# CHECKOUT OUR NEW WEBPAGE

The Office of International and National Student Exchange Programs launched its new webpage on the new SCSU website in February 2024. To access this dynamic page, visit [scsu.edu](https://scsu.edu), click "Menu," hover over "Academics," then click on "Global Engagement." The webpage features the National Student Exchange Program (NSE), cultural immersion, study abroad, affiliate programs, newsletters, annual reports, photo galleries, FAQs, information on getting a passport, international student visas, admission requirements, work-study, volunteer opportunities, international student support, the International Students Association, and more.



OINSEP landing page shows students in Arachova, Greece

<https://scsu.edu/academics/academic-affairs/international-and-national-student-exchange-programs/index.php>

Ready to get started on your international journey?  
Visit us in Belcher Hall rooms 145 and 312.  
Call us at (803) 813-1144/536-7903.  
Email: [studyabroad@scsu.edu](mailto:studyabroad@scsu.edu)



Among the images you will see in the photo galleries on the OINSEP webpage are students participating in cooking Caribbean food at an International Showcase (left) in Staley Hall on campus, and students riding bikes in Amsterdam (right).



# TASTE OF THE WORLD



Students sampling international dishes at the Taste of the World event in Belcher Hall.

OINSEP supports all international initiatives on campus. In March 2024, the College of Business and Information Systems held its 15th Annual Business Week. On Thursday, March 28, 2024, one of the Week's key calendar events, the Taste of the World, was held in Belcher Hall.

As it does each year, OINSEP sets up its extensive international flag inventory in the lobby of Belcher Hall to help celebrate the occasion. Over 80 flags representing the countries from which our international students, faculty, and staff hail were displayed.

The Taste of the World luncheon featured delicious food prepared by international faculty, staff, and students who shared sweet and savory dishes from their home countries with the SCSU community. Dr. David Jamison, organizes this event. Dr. Jamison has traveled to many countries around the world and recently accompanied Business students and faculty on a trip to Kenya in December 2023.



**Above Left:** Dr. David Jamison, Associate Professor of Marketing and International Business Coordinator organizes the annual Taste of the World. Dr. Jamison is also the Principal Investigator of the Business International Education Grant.

**Above Right:** Dr. and Mrs. Mathew Guah prepare food for the Taste of the World. Dr. Guah is Dean of the College of Business.

## FLAG QUIZ



**Left:**  
#7: These flags and the globe are installed in which international airport in Europe?



#8: In which SC town did this parade take place?

**Right:**  
#9: This umbrella represents the flag of which South American country?



# SPRING 2024 INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE

South Carolina State University hosted its Spring 2024 International Showcase on March 7, 2024 at the Fine Arts Center. Organized by the Office of International and National Student Exchange Programs (OINSEP) in collaboration with the International Students Association (ISA) and Felton Laboratory Charter School, the event celebrated diversity through various activities.

Dr. Learie Luke, Director of OINSEP, emphasized the event's uniqueness in bringing together cultural performances, international cuisine, and artifacts from a number of countries. Previous showcases had only focused on a single country. The Spring 2024 International Showcase featured a flag procession led by student leaders and participants from Felton's Gifted and Talented program, ISA members, and students with international heritage. The program included welcome and greetings in different languages, setting a vibrant tone for the evening.

The showcase highlighted African dances by *All in One* and a captivating performance by ISA's Public Relations Chair. A fashion show, featuring designs modeled by college students and participants from Felton, added a stylish flair to the event. Attendees also engaged in an international quiz and enjoyed a presentation on Ghanaian culture by Dr. Luke, showcasing student experiences from a cultural immersion trip to Ghana.

The event included awards recognizing the contributions of students, faculty, and staff to international awareness and cultural immersion. Faculty members and students received accolades for their efforts in promoting global understanding on campus. The event included table displays featuring various countries. Attendees had the opportunity to visit with students who put together the display boards and cultural artifacts. The program ended with a meal of delicious Indian cuisine.

Overall, the Spring 2024 International Showcase at South Carolina State University successfully celebrated cultural diversity and provided attendees with a rich, immersive experience. Plans are underway for future events, promising continued opportunities for cultural exchange and education within the university community.



Student leaders and Felton students line up for the flag procession.



Drs. David Jamison and Franklyn Pressley flank Paul Omulokoli, Sophia Papa, Hannah Masau, Debbie Inda, T. Julianna Chengula and Rejoice Anaele who received International Student of the Year Awards.



**Left:** Students from Felton Charter School stand with their country table display on India.



Model from Koture



**Below:** The winner of the Felton Charter School country table display category worked on the USVI.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: TANZANIA

**Tumlumbe Juliana Chengula** from Tanzania, graduated in May 2024 with an MS in Transportation. Her most positive experience at SCSU was networking with people and having an immersive HBCU experience. Her favorite professor was Dr. Nikunja



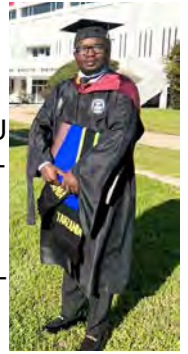
Swain whose style of course delivery was interestingly engaging, and who made himself available during most of the off-classroom hours to help in whatever concerns students had. She also speaks highly of Dr. Renu Singh who always encouraged students to explore beyond their horizon. In her best Southern accent, she says: "Y'all are amazing man, I'm finna come back to the bulldog community one day!!"

The experience at SCSU that most made her feel most connected to her Tanzanian homeland was teaching *Basic Conversational Swahili* as one of the co-founders of that non-credit course. By providing Swahili instruction, she was able to showcase Tanzania's culture and etiquette through the national language. "The best moments were when my 'students' would greet me in Swahili whenever we crossed paths off and on campus," says Juliana.

Juliana was very much involved in extra-curricular activities at STATE as an executive member of the International Students Association, Vice President-Social Activities for the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Vice President of the National Society of Black Engineers, and First Runner-up in the 2023 BECT Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Competition. She was also a BECT entrepreneurship scholarship awardee for 2023-2024, and the best female student runner in the 2023 Bulldogs on the Run 5K race.

Juliana currently works as an Intelligent Transportation Systems Engineer at HNTB Corporation stationed at its Kansas City, Missouri office. She encourages incoming international students to network with as many people as possible and to learn as much as they can from them. "I also urge them to be good ambassadors of their home countries."

**Cuthbert Ruseruka** from Tanzania graduated in December 2023 with an MS degree in Transportation.



His most positive experience at SCSU was witnessing the University's commitment to inclusivity. He notes that "students from all backgrounds are valued and embraced equally, creating a truly welcoming environment for everyone." His favorite professor was Dr. Saidi Siuhi. "He has been my mentor since the very first day we met on campus, both in education and real life. . . . He was always available for consultation whenever I needed him. I [will] always remember and cherish his guidance. Of course, behind him, there's another smart professor, Dr. Judith Mwakalonge, who has also played a major role in my success journey."

The experiences that made him feel most connected to his home country while at SCSU were the International Showcases organized by OINSEP when "we get to meet and enjoy the cultural heritage of our fellow students and staff from different countries in the world. I remember how magnificent it was when we partnered with our neighboring country, Kenya, to prepare a Tanzania and Kenya Showcase. It was a remarkable and heartwarming experience."

Cuthbert works as a Transportation/Roadway Engineer at Consor Engineers based in San Antonio, TX. He gives the following advice to incoming international students: "SCSU opens the world for us. Attend those classes, do that research, and get ready to embrace the opportunities down the road." He further points out to all students that SCSU has an environment conducive for academic success. "Being located in Orangeburg, a small city of about 14,000 residents, the environment offers minimum distractions to students and offers optimum concentration. . . . I would therefore advise all students to [take advantage of] this opportunity."

## FULBRIGHT U.S. STUDENT PROGRAM, GILMAN, ETC.

There are many opportunities and financial awards available to students who wish to see the world and study or work in another country. The Fulbright US Student Program is one such avenue that allows students who have earned an undergraduate degree to teach English in another country or go to graduate school and/or conduct research overseas. To inform students about these opportunities, OINSEP collaborated with Dr. David Jamison (left), International Coordinator in the College of Business, to host Fulbright Alumni Ambassador Jimmy Anderson (right).



The event was held in Belcher Hall on March 28, 2024 and was well attended.

Students were able to identify with Anderson, a young African American who participated in the Fulbright US Student Program in Canada. His Fulbright led him to serve in the White House as the Director of Veterans Engagement. Prior to that, he served as the Deputy White House Liaison and Special Advisor to Secretary McDonough at the Department of Veterans Affairs. He has spent over a decade in uniform and continues to serve as a Captain in the Air Force Reserve at the Pentagon. Students were very intrigued with Anderson's presentation and experience.

The application process for the US Student Fulbright Program begins a year in advance of the award. Therefore, students are advised to apply in the Fall of their senior year for an early October deadline. Dr. Learie Luke assists SCSU students who apply for the award. For more information visit <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/about/fulbright-us-student-program>. Other funding sources follow.

**The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS)** In the CLS program, students spend eight to ten weeks abroad over the summer studying one of 15 critical languages. The CLS Program, a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is part of a U.S. government's initiative to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering foreign languages that are critical to national security and economic prosperity. CLS Scholarship awards are up to \$8,000.

**Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship** Thinking of studying or interning abroad? Receive up to \$5,000 (or up to \$8,000 if you're studying a Critical Needs Language) to go abroad on an in-person program as a college student, if you're a U.S. citizen and Federal Pell Grant recipient! The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship application is open to citizens or nationals of the US. Students must be in good standing.

**Gilman-McCain Scholarship** Receive \$5,000 if you're a child or spousal dependent of an active duty military member and receive any type of Title IV Federal Financial Aid to go abroad on an in-person program. For assistance with Study Away scholarships contact Dominique Rolle at [drolle1@scsu.edu](mailto:drolle1@scsu.edu).

## NATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

South Carolina State University is a member institution of the National Student Exchange Program (NSE). The program provides students with an experience that takes them outside of their comfort zones and challenges them to experience life from a different point of view as they study at a host institution in the US or Canada. Currently, there are over 200 participating institutions that are NSE partners. Ms. Dominique Rolle is the NSE Coordinator. You can review the NSE program and schools at [www.NSE.org](http://www.NSE.org).



# STATS ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: US & SCSU

**Statistics from the 2023 Open Doors Report** published by the Institute of International Education show that during the 2022–2023 year, the USA welcomed and hosted 1,057,188 international students from more than 210 places of origin, “a 12 percent increase compared to the previous academic year. This is the fastest growth rate in more than 40 years.” Most students pursued degrees in the STEM fields and Business.

The top places of origin for international students are as follows:

- 27.4.6% from China
- 25.4% from India
- 4.1% from South Korea
- 2.6% from Canada
- 2.1% from Vietnam
- 2.1% from Taiwan
- All other countries sent less than 2%

The number US Students studying abroad for academic credit in 2021–2022 was 188,753. The majority (over 88%) of them studied in Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, and Asia. Most of them (68.3%) were white, with Blacks contributing 4.1%, Hispanics 12.3% and Asians or Pacific Islanders 10%.

The number of US students who participated in non-credit experiential activities, such as work, internships, volunteering, and research abroad was 12,697. “Furthermore, 249 U.S. institutions reported that 16,626 students participated in online global learning opportunities, including remote internships, collaborative project-based learning, and videoconference dialogues.”

**Statistics from the Office of Institutional Research at SCSU** show that 40 International Students studied in Bulldog Country during the 2022–2023 academic year. They were from 18 places of origin as follows:

- 12.5% or 5 from Morocco
- 10% or 4 from Kenya
- 10% or 4 from Serbia
- 10% or 4 from Tanzania
- 10% or 4 from Serbia
- 7.5% or 3 from Belarus
- 7.5% or 3 from Brazil
- 7.5% or 3 from Canada
- 7.5% or 3 from India
- 5 % or 2 from Nigeria
- 2.5% or 1 from Bulgaria
- 2.5% or 1 from Germany
- 2.5% or 1 from Jamaica
- 2.5% or 1 from Kazakhstan
- 2.5% or 1 from the Philippines
- 2.5% or 1 from Spain
- 2.5% or 1 from Tunisia
- 2.5% or 1 from the British Virgin Islands

OINSEP data for 2022–2023 reveal the following for SCSU students:

- 1 student participated in the National Student Exchange Program (NSE).
- 17 students, 2 faculty, and 4 staff members engaged in cultural immersion.
- 6 students participated in online collaborative project-based learning and videoconference dialogues with colleagues at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus.

## FLAG QUIZ



### Quiz Prizes

If you get 90% of the answers correct and emailed to [lluke@scsu.edu](mailto:lluke@scsu.edu) by August 23rd, you will win a prize!

#10: In which building on campus was the flags in these pictures installed? Given the traditional clothing, which country do most of the people in the photo come from?

## INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

- Allows you to see the world "up close and personal."
- Exposes you to new cultures and perspectives.
- Improves cultural competence.
- Fosters intercultural communication.
- Helps you develop confidence as you move outside your comfort zone.
- Promotes foreign language acquisition.





# PEACE CORPS, ISA, WHAT'S NEXT

## The Peace Corps

The Peace Corps is an agency of the United States Government that trains and deploys volunteers to go across the world to provide development assistance. On November 9, 2023, Peace Corps Recruiter Renwick "Mac" McNeil set up a table display in the Student Center and later made a short presentation about the Peace Corps during the Nigerian Showcase. These presentations informed students about the mission of the Peace Corps, which is "To promote world peace and friendship through community-based development and intercultural understanding." OINSEP is excited to partner with the Peace Corps and encourages all students to consider the benefits of serving as a cultural ambassador overseas with the Peace Corps. If you need additional information on the Peace Corps, please visit their website at <https://www.peacecorps.gov/> or email McNeil at [rmcneil@peacecorps.gov](mailto:rmcneil@peacecorps.gov).



## Revival of the International Students Association

In Summer 2023, OINSEP submitted paperwork to re-establish the International Students Association (ISA). The ISA welcomes international as well as domestic students who wish to promote international awareness, international understanding, and world affairs education by hosting programs and engaging in experiences that feature diverse global cultures. The first president under the revived ISA for the 2023-2024 year was Sophia Papa, whose leadership work with the organization led to her winning the International Student of the Year Award. Under her leadership, the ISA held meetings and fundraisers, participated in the Trunk O' Treat for Felton and other kids during Halloween, and played a critical role in the Spring 2024 International Showcase. Sophia, who graduated in May 2024, is from the Philippines and was an Army Combat Medic and an Emergency Medical Technician while at SCSU. The president of the ISA for the 2024-2025 year is Rejoice Anaele, a Business major.



## What's Coming in 2024-2025

In the 2024-2025 academic year, OINSEP will continue its quality programming of international showcases, the Parade of Nations Flag Procession, Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations, a Passport Fair, support of the International Students Association, and much more.

What's new? We are working on the following: a Global Engagement Fair in September to expose students to study abroad opportunities and funding; cultural immersion trips to the Caribbean and hopefully to Brazil; international cuisine cooking classes; the development of an International Students Handbook; hosting a Cultural Intelligence Workshop; the opening of an International Resource Center on campus; the celebration of significant holidays of various countries, as well as an enhanced digital presence. Not only is OINSEP on the SCSU webpage, **OINSEP is now on Instagram at SCSUGlobal1896**. So, follow us, like and share our posts!



# THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

OINSEP is extremely grateful to everyone who supported and attended its events. The staff, Ms. Dominique Rolle and Dr. Learie Luke, are indebted to those who helped make OINSEP's programs impactful, including President Alexander Conyers, Provost Frederick Evans, Associate Provost David Staten, various campus partners, as well as many students, faculty, and staff across the University. We hope that our efforts will attract philanthropic supporters who will help sponsor on-campus programs as well as subsidize international trips so that more students can benefit from cross-cultural programming and international cultural immersion travel before they graduate. If you wish to make a donation, contact Dr. Luke at [lluke@scsu.edu](mailto:lluke@scsu.edu). No amount is too small.

## Our Campus Partners

Business International Education Grant  
College of Business and Information Systems  
Division of Public Service and Agriculture  
International Advisory Committee  
International Students  
Office of Accounts Payable  
Office of Student Life and Leadership  
Office of the President  
Office of Title III Programs

Campus Police  
Department of Family & Consumer Sciences  
Felton Laboratory Charter School  
International Faculty and Staff  
Marching 101 Band  
Office of Procurement  
Office of the Assoc. Provost for Academic Affairs  
Office of the Provost  
Swahili Instructors from Tanzania and Kenya

## MISSION

The mission of the Office of International and National Student Exchange Programs (OINSEP) is to strengthen the academic and cultural environment of South Carolina State University using initiatives that support the internalization of the campus community, in keeping with the University's mission statement, by offering a diverse array of intercultural programs, courses, and international travel opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni.



**Director**  
Dr. Learie Luke  
[lluke@scsu.edu](mailto:lluke@scsu.edu)

**STAFF**



SCSU students in France with the Eiffel Tower in the background, 2018



**Int'l Education Coordinator**  
Dominique Rolle  
[drolle1@scsu.edu](mailto:drolle1@scsu.edu)

**STAFF**

South Carolina State University provides equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status in accordance with federal and state laws.