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# MOSAIC



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## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS FROM ACROSS THE STATE ATTEND MAIE WINTER CONFERENCE 2014 AT MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Jenny Price  
International Student Advisor

On February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, the Office of Global Education hosted over 55 international educators from various universities, colleges, and high schools across the state of Mississippi for the Mississippi Association of International Educators and StudyMississippi Annual Winter Conference. Some of the registrants included representatives from the University of Mississippi, Mississippi State University, Hinds Community College, Meridian Community College, Piney Woods School, and St. Andrews High School. The theme of this year's conference was Globalizing Mississippi and included presenters from all over the Southeast region. One of the most notable presentations

included representatives from the Iraqi government regarding the recruitment and retention of international students sponsored by the newly developed Iraqi government scholarship program. Other topics presented on included the *State of Global Education in Mississippi* by Chris Harth from St. Andrews Episcopal School; *DMV Logistics and Problem Areas* by Barbara Jackson of the University of Southern Mississippi and a Mississippi Department of Motor Vehicles Representative; *Campus Sentinel* by the Department of Homeland Security; and *Immigration Laws and Trends* by Armstrong Law firm out of Tuscaloosa, AL. Registrants left the conference Friday afternoon, February 21<sup>st</sup> having refreshed their knowledge on current immigration rules and

regulations regarding international students, learned of new government-sponsored programs in other countries, shared recruitment and retention strategies for international students on their respective campuses, and been thoroughly impressed by the historic beauty and hospitality of their host institution, Mississippi College.



Dr. Ammar Azeez Alsahrawi, MD, Cultural Attachè, Embassy of the Republic of Iraq (left) with Mrs. Mei-Chi Piletz, Executive Director of the Office of Global Education (right)

## INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS SOAR THIS SPRING SEMESTER

Wen Weng  
International Admissions Specialist

Under the leadership of Executive Director Mei-Chi Piletz, the Office of Global Education has recruited 91 new international students from 10 different countries this Spring 2014 semester. Among those 91 international students, 66 are graduate students and 25 are undergraduates. Also, of those 91 students, 37 students are from India, 30 students are from Saudi Arabia, and 15 students are from China. Also

noteworthy this semester, we had the privilege to welcome our first ever student from Bangladesh. Unsurprisingly, the most popular majors among our new international students are: Business, Computer Science, Biology, and Health Services Administration. We have seen an overall increase of 29 students in our international student recruitment since the Fall 2013 semester. We have also seen a substantial increase in the number of Saudi Arabian students.

The presence of our international students not only helps the university to achieve a healthy integration of diverse cultures, it also enriches the experiences of our American students. They are truly valuable assets to the University. We are looking forward to successful continuation of the school year and a continued growth in our international student population for years to come.



## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Mei-Chi Piletz  
Executive Director  
Office of Global Education

As another academic year (2013 fall-2014 spring) comes to a close, I wish to express my gratitude to all my staff at the Office of Global Education (OGE) and the teachers at the Intensive English Program (IEP) for their hard work and dedication to our students. The staff and teachers work hard to make sure our international students are very well served and benefit from our excellent educational programs so that they are able to garner successful academic results at MC. This has been an exciting time for the Office of Global Education! OGE is undergoing exciting changes. We invite you to visit our evolving web site and meet the newest members of our staff. Featured in this issue of Mosaic, to name a few, are Student Spotlight – Diego Garcia Geraldo, Lunar New Year Celebration, MAIE Conference, National Championship Tournament for Ping Pong, New Staff Member - Wen Weng, Spring Intake Numbers, and other hot topics and events. We'd also like to take this time to thank our MC family and communities for your continuous support of our various international programs. Without you some activities might have fallen by the wayside. Please accept our deepest appreciation!

Mei-Chi Piletz  
Executive Director

## OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION CELEBRATES THE LUNAR NEW YEAR

*Brittany Perrotta  
Residence Life Assistant*

It was standing room only at the Office of Global Education's Lunar New Year Celebration held on Friday January 31, 2014. The Lunar New Year, based on the Chinese Lunar calendar, marks the official New Year for many Asian countries including China, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. Since many of Mississippi College's international students would be missing out on their family celebrations, the Office of Global Education wanted to make this New Year extra special.

Volunteers spent the entire day making 100's of homemade Chinese dumplings. Guests were greeted with the sweet aroma of Chinese food and then entertained by an array of vocal performances. The party continued after the performances ended. Students were given an opportunity to win tickets to this year's International Festival by participating in Lunar Bingo. The evening was capped off with karaoke and dancing. Students from countries all over the world including the United States, Mexico, Russia, Iran, Nigeria, Bangladesh, China and more came together to make Lunar New Year 2014 truly a night to be remembered.



(Left to right) : Joesph (Nigeria), MD Byzid (Bangladesh), director Mrs. Mei-Chi Piletz, and Tianwen (Robby) Chen (China) enjoy celebrating the Lunar New Year.

## MC PING PONG TEAM PLACES SECOND IN NORTH AMERICA

*Huan "Ken" Qiu  
Head Coach, Table Tennis Team*

The 2013-2014 marks the seventh season of Ping Pong here at Mississippi College and it has been a great success! After competing in the NCTTA national tournament in Monroeville, Pennsylvania on April 4 and 6, our team ranked second in the Coed-Team competition, first and second in the Male-Singles competition, and second in the Male-Doubles competition. In addition to ranking high on the national level, we have consistently dominated the Dixie Division Tournament also for the past seven years. Although we remain in second nationally, we have achieved great improvement in team performance this year. It is the first year for us to obtain individual national titles such as first and second in the Singles completion and second in the Male-Doubles competition. These

new improvements have earned us recognition. Just recently, Wall Street Journal and China Daily USA have both featured articles about MC's team on the front page of their publications. As head coach, I must say "thank you" to MC's president, Lee Royce, all of the vice presidents, our sponsor Dr. Louis Lau, and other stakeholders for all the support given during this year. Without their support, we wouldn't be where we are today.



*Ping Pong Team Members (left to right, bottom to top): Huan (Ken) Qiu (coach), Junyu Xiao, Tyler Brogder, Zhiqiao Xie, Zesheng Huang, Yichi Zhang, and Cheng Li*

## OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION WELCOMES NEW ADMISSIONS SPECIALIST:

*Jenny Price  
International Student Advisor*

Ms. Wen Weng came to join the Office of Global Education in October, 2013 as the new International Admissions Specialist. Ms. Weng was born and raised in Wenzhou, China and went on to study English at Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications where she graduated in with a Bachelor's of Arts in 2007. Just a month after graduating from the university, Ms. Weng flew to the United States to continue her studies at Jackson State University. While at Jackson State University, Ms. Weng studied Public Relations and Communication and graduated with a Master of Science in 2009. After graduating with her Master's degree, Ms. Weng took advantage of Optional Practical Training (a 12-month work permit allowed to international students by USCIS following completion a

Weng completed her OPT at Jackson State working in the Office of China Initiatives as an assistant to the director. In October, 2013, a few months after becoming a permanent resident of the U.S., Ms. Weng submitted her application to work at Mississippi College.. Ms. Weng was more than qualified for the position and was quickly hired. Since being hired, Ms. Weng has assisted with the processing of over a 1,000 applications and helped countless students with their transition into Mississippi College.



*New International Admissions Specialist: Ms. Wen Weng*

# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH FORUM!

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## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: *DIEGO GARCIA GIRALDO*

*Jenny Price*  
*International Student Advisor*

This month's student spotlight is on Diego Garcia Giraldo, Mississippi College's only Spanish international student. Deigo started at Mississippi College in August 2013 and will complete his Master's in Business Administration (a two year program) this May 2014 - only 9 months from the time he began his degree program. This is impressive in and of itself, but there are so many more noteworthy things to know about Diego and how he came to study at Mississippi College.

Diego grew up in Madrid, Spain and was the first of his family to go to college. He knew growing up that he wanted to become some sort of engineer, but was a mediocre student in high school. He explained that so much of a student's acceptance to degree programs in Spain is hinged upon what their GPA was in high school. Because he was only an 'okay' student, he was not eligible for any of the engineering programs at the universities, so he pursued his bachelor's degree at Polytechnic University of Madrid in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering.

After finishing his degree, he went to work for various privately-owned shipyards. Not being satisfied with the fact that he had not yet obtained a fully-focused engineering degree, a buddy convinced him to go back and get

Once he realized his love for the subject and his desire to study it, he took as many classes as he could handle and completed his second bachelor's degree in three years.

After about five years of working for the privately-owned shipyards in Spain and having obtained his second bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering, Diego went to work as an inspector for the Maritime Administration, a section of the Ministry of Public Transportation for the country of Spain. During that time, Diego moved up in the ranks and became an Inspector Manager.

In 2009, Diego applied through the Maritime Administration to complete a FullBright Foreign Student Program which would allow him to come to the United States and obtain a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering. Diego became the first Spaniard in the University of California, Berkley's Engineering Program. He also became the first person to complete the two-year program in only a year's time.

After graduating from University of California, Berkley with a Master's of Science in Mechanical



*Diego (left) pictured here with Mrs. Jenny Price (DSO) and Mrs. Mei-Chi Piletz (Executive Director)*

Engineering, Diego returned home to Spain to continue working for the Maritime Administration as well as full-fill his obligations as a Fullbright Student Program recipient. After about three years and having been promoted to the Director of Inspectors position, Diego longed for more. He was presenting in Dulian, China when he happened to meet MC's Executive Director of International Programs, Mrs. Mei-Chi Piletz. At the time she encouraged him to apply to Mississippi College, but wasn't really sure if he actually would. Diego was looking for an adventure and felt that it opportunistic that he had met Mrs. Piletz, so he applied to the MBA program at MC and was accepted.

Now that he approaches graduation, it is time to start thinking about what he will do next. He plans to take advantage of the USCIS benefit of Optional Practical Training, which will allow him to further his US education by obtaining practical experience working in a US business. He desires to use his previous experience with shipping coupled with his new Master's degree in business, so he has begun applying to various companies located in coastal cities across the U.S. When asked what his future holds, he says he doesn't know but is excited and hopeful.

Note: Diego graduated in May 2014 with a 4.0 GPA.