From the Director

Welcome to the start of a new academic year at the Center for International Studies! Each year I have the pleasure to write to you about the accomplishments of our students, faculty, and administrators. I am particularly pleased to inform that last year was a stellar year for International Studies, but I have space to report only a few momentous developments.

First, the Center was designated as the lead academic program at Texas State to award undergraduate Peace Corps Prep Certificates to students interested in the Peace Corps. Academic reviewers, over the past 20 years, have consistently recognized the Center as “the top IS Program in the southwest” and we believe the Peace Corps partnership is a direct result of that recognition. Of course, the best proof of our excellence is the success of our students and alumni.

I am particularly proud to inform you that two of our graduate students, Kathryn Burns and Alfredo Ramirez, are the first students from Texas State to win the prestigious Boren Fellowship, which provides $30,000 for study abroad support. Alfredo is studying in Brazil and Kathryn is in Jordan. In addition, six other undergraduate and graduate students won the highly competitive Wilson Fellowship that supports internships in Costa Rica. Dozens of other students won scholarships from the Center’s scholarships fund and the Texas State Study Abroad Fund.

The Center also partnered with the Graduate College to apply to have Texas State be named a Peace Corps Coverdell Fellowship Institution. We are hopeful that the application will be approved, and that Texas State will be the only college to offer such a program in the state!

We are especially grateful to our alumni, faculty, board members, and friends who donate gifts for student scholarships. Such donations are an investment in the future of International Studies, its students, and Texas State University.

Please come by and visit us at the Center in Derrick Hall.
Center for International Studies hosts Obama Legacy Conference

The two-day interdisciplinary conference was hosted by The Center for International Studies on February 2-3, 2017. Prominent scholars from universities across Texas and the United States joined professionals in law, journalism, diplomacy, healthcare and criminal justice to discuss the likely domestic and foreign policy legacies of the Obama administration.

Jeremi Suri, Mack Brown Distinguished Chair for Leadership in Global Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, delivered a keynote address. H.W. Brands, Jack Blanton Sr. Chair in History at the University of Texas at Austin, delivered a keynote on the second day of the conference.

The Center also hosted James K. Galbraith, Lloyd Bentsen Jr. Chair in Government/Business at the University of Texas at Austin.

H.W. Brands giving a lecture entitled: History Will Treat Me Kindly

Jeremi Suri giving a lecture entitled: Barack Obama’s Struggle to End the Cold War (Again)

James K. Galbraith, the Lloyd Bentsen Chair in Government/ Business Relations at the University of Texas at Austin giving a lecture entitled: Obama’s Economics: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
Carlos Gonzalez Gutierrez, Consul General of Mexico in Austin (Left), and Manuel Gonzalez Oropeza (right), former Magistrate of the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judicial Branch in Mexico, discussing Mexico & Latin America during the Obama Administration.

Ronald Johnson, Professor of History at Texas State University, discussing Cuba & the Caribbean during the Obama Administration. (left to right) Paul Hart, Professor of History at Texas State University, Neil Foley, Robert H. and Nancy Dedman Chair in History at Southern Methodist University, and Roque Planas, of the Huffington Post discussing Immigration during the Obama Administration.

Mary Brennan, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, giving a presentation on Michelle Obama and her impact as First Lady.
Paul Hart, Associate Director for the Center for International Studies publishes *Emiliano Zapata: Mexico’s Social Revolutionary*


“Accessible and compelling, Paul Hart offers a page-turning narrative of Emiliano Zapata’s revolutionary movement. Documenting Zapata’s fierce commitment to the dispossessed, his national vision to address historic injustice, and his forces’ dogged struggle against more powerful and better-equipped armies, Hart shows how the Zapatistas shaped the course and outcome of the 1910-1920 Mexican Revolution.”

- Tania Padilla, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Center for International Studies recognizes Mary Brennan as Administrator of the Year and Jennifer Devine as Professor of the Year!

Dr. Brennan is a professor in the Department of History and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Dr. Devine is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography.
“When I decided to take an internship with Sights Unseen, I did not think of the opportunities that would unfold in front of me. It feels as though I have stumbled in the right place at the right time.

Sights Unseen is a non-profit organization located in San Antonio, Texas and directed by Texas State University alumnus Kelly Broome. Their mission is simple: to put glasses on as many faces as possible. Some people, like me, hardly think about not being able to read the powerpoint presentation from the back of the class, but for others this is their reality. If lucky, those who need help are able to get glasses, but for those in the developing world this is not an option.

Unsure of the adventure that would be given to me, I accepted the internship, looking to gain tangible experience working with an NGO which took me to one of the last places I would expect to be, Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso is a former French colony, located in West Africa between Mali and Côte D’Ivoire. Having never traveled to Africa before I was excited, nervous, scared, and many other emotions rolled into one graduate student. It didn’t hurt that I hold a bachelor’s in French from Texas A&M University so communication was easier.

We brought over 1,000 pairs of children’s glasses, and distributed them between a private school for children with disabilities and an urban UNHCR refugee camp, both located in the capital of Ouagadougou, as well as a UNHCR refugee camp in Dori, called Goudebou. During the screening and distribution, I collected data to be able to better predict how many glasses we will need for the next deployment, and how many individuals needed medical attention to fix eye issues such as cataracts, glaucoma, trachoma, etc. In between distributions, we met with the director of UNHCR in Burkina Faso, the United States Embassy, IEDA Relief, and the local Rotary clubs, to network and spread awareness for our mission.

Being in the International Studies department at Texas State University is perfect because it emphasizes the importance of understanding cultural differences. Sights Unseen is very careful about working in countries that already have an optometrist present, the goal is to not put someone else out of business or disrupt the local economy.

The experience I gained in Burkina Faso is unique and will prepare me for future visits to developing countries. Being able to plan for NGO deployments or fundraise is one thing, but to be able to immediately see the gratitude and awe in the faces of adults and children who can now see clearly is priceless.”
N’Deye Ndiaye - International Relations Undergraduate Student
Gilman Scholarship Winner

“My study abroad trip to Morocco has been the most rewarding part of my undergraduate career. I was able to spend the whole summer in Morocco thanks to various scholarships including the Gilman International Scholarship. For the first month in Morocco I took classes with local professors and went on multiple excursions visiting different cities. The second month, I volunteered at Al Amal, a local non-profit in Meknes, Morocco.

This organization serves the local women and youth community, teaching them artisan skills, providing cooking, and English classes. I taught to children ages 5-12 English for four weeks. Also during this time, the other volunteers and I renovated the Al Amal space. We built new storage spaces, and purchased materials, including a new desk for the founder of the organization. I helped repaint and decorate the space, and learned a few traditional Moroccan dishes from the women there. Finally, we started a GoFundMe account for the organization so that they can continue to provide these services to more women. The whole program reaffirmed that I am in the right field of study.”

Lucretia Stanley - International Relations Undergraduate Student
Critical Language Scholarship Recipient

“The Critical Language Scholarship Program is an intensive language program that focuses on less commonly taught languages critical to US security, diplomacy, and business. With the CLS Program, I will be traveling to Baku, Azerbaijan for eight weeks to study Turkish. I hope to pursue a career as a foreign service officer, and I believe that the knowledge of Turkish and Eurasian culture gained from the CLS program will help me achieve this goal.”
International Studies Graduate Students Making History!

The Center for International Studies is proud to recognize two International Studies Graduate Students as the first Boren Fellowship Award winners in Texas State history!

David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships are sponsored by the National Security Education Program (NSEP), a major federal initiative designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of U.S. citizens with foreign language and international skills. Boren Awards provide U.S. undergraduate and graduate students with resources and encouragement to acquire language skills and experience in countries critical to the future security and stability of the United States. In exchange for funding, Boren award recipients agree to work in the federal government for a period of at least one year.

Alfredo Ramirez studied Portuguese at the University of Chicago this Summer and will be studying at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina in Florianopolis, Brazil, in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

Kathryn Burns will be studying Arabic through the Kelsey Arabic Program in Amman, Jordan, beginning in Summer 2017.
New Endeavors at the Center

Verena and Kenneth J. Wilson Latin America Research Program

The Center for International Studies completed year one of the Verena and Kenneth J. Wilson Latin America Research Program. The program made it possible for five Texas State students to intern in Costa Rica in the fields of education, international marketing, and conservation efforts. Texas State Faculty were also awarded research grants to explore opportunities for service learning opportunities for students in Costa Rica, and further international research. The Center is grateful for the contribution of Verena and Ken Wilson. Their support continues to provide students with unique opportunities to make a difference in the international community.

Dr. Paul Hart, Associate Director for the Center for International Studies, completed a site visit to Hibiscus Alternative Travels to complete a feasibility study regarding a future faculty-led program to Costa Rica that will incorporate a service learning component.

Dr. Catherine Hawkins, Professor in the School of Social Work and Honorary Professor of International Studies attended the Global Awareness Society International Conference in Costa Rica. Dr. Hawkins gave a presentation entitled: Pursuing Peace: Sustainability and Human Rights in a Global Contest. Dr. Hawkins researched various service learning opportunities for Texas State students as well.

Dr. Ruth Taylor, Professor of Marketing and Honorary Professor of International Studies, received Wilson endowment support to complete field research in Guatemala with an emphasis on the study of traditional back strap hand weavers and the marketing techniques they employ to produce and sell hand woven textiles to sustain their rural volcanic village livelihoods, preserve their cultural weaving techniques, patterns, and traditions.

Dr. Ronald Johnson, Associate Professor of History and Honorary Professor of International Studies, continued research in Haiti and Nassau for his new manuscript, entitled, Revolutionary Relations: How the United States and Haiti Forged a Shared History.

The book examines the diplomatic and cultural connections between the western Atlantic world’s first two nation-states, combining French-language archival materials with U.S. printed and manuscript sources to detail mutual socio-political exchanges and lasting cultural connections. It will be the first study to identify early migrants from Haiti as an immigrant group, alongside the Irish and Germans, and to measure their contributions to early American society.

“The Wilson grant was instrumental in allowing me to uncover the path of Haitian immigrant families to the United States (like that of famous African American writer James Weldon Johnson) and of American immigrants to Haiti (like the father of Frankétienne, the Pulitzer-Prize nominated Haitian writer). In the case of the latter, I was able to meet with the Frankétienne at his home during my funded visit to Port-au-Prince.”

- Dr. Ronald Johnson
Graduation Announcements

Congratulations BAIS Class of Spring 2017

Bauersfeld, Katherine Anne
Baxter, Victoria Elise
Cantu, Efrain
Chukwu, Appolonia Ogechukwu
Cooley, Jayla Nicole
Courtney, Justin
Craig, Nicole M.
DeBray, Katherine E.
Endsley, Melissa J.
Garza, Abigail F.
Gomez, Ricky
Gonzalez Vara, Andrea
Hernandez, Brenda Magaly Ortiz
Kerr, Major K.
Keyse, Loran
McClenney, Joshua Andrew
McClure, Lucas Christopher
Mwanzuzi, Noemie Rongo
Parmar, Gemma
Pavey, Sara Michaela
Per centi, Kristyn Taylor
Pyle, Whitney Payge
Reyna, Leslie Marie
Riley, Elizabeth A.
Seaborne, Vivian Hart
Tavarez, Alexa Bella
Tysinger, Kyle Austin
Vazquez, Simon Gregory
Ventura, Norma Elizabeth
Westerlund, Robyn Rose

Congratulations BAIS Class of Summer 2017

Alfred, Daleesa Wrenell
Amoussa, Latifou
Armstrong, Katrina Gayle
Blanco, Michael
Cala-Smith, Gianna Rebecca
Ficke, Ellen M.
Garcia, Jonathan Ray
Myers, Samuel W.
Nikolaev, Denis Sergevich
Pachulski, Daniel Jaco
Vera Borunda, Tania
Villanueva, Ernesto N.
Wa Boudjiho, Jane Juliana

Congratulations MA Class of Spring 2017

King, Christopher Thomas
Vickers, Marisa C.
Winson, Charles G.

The Center for International Studies is proud of your accomplishment and wish you well in your professional journey. We are confident that as new graduates, you will utilize the knowledge and skills cultivated in the International Studies program and develop into global citizens in an effort to become leaders in an interdependent world!
Support The Center for International Studies at Texas State

If you would like to make a difference for current students at Texas State, please consider supporting the Center for International Studies. Your contribution will aid students in the form of academic and travel scholarships, research awards, presentation opportunities, public programming and academic resources.

You can view the various scholarships that benefit current International Studies students [HERE] and decide which fund you are interested in supporting.

The Center for International Studies thanks you for your generosity.

Dr. Dennis Dunn
Center for International Studies
Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas 78666

If you are interested in making a major gift, or for immediate assistance, please call our Center at 512-245-2339

If you would like to give via the online donation form please see the instructions below:

Click [DONATE] which will immediately take you to the donation form. To give to The Center for International Studies, follow these steps:

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2. Under the Designation Tab select “Search for designation not listed”
3. You will be taken to the Giving Search page. Select “College of Liberal Arts” for division and “International Studies” for Department.
4. Click on the “Fund” box to which you would like to donate.
5. Click “Continue” and you will be directed to enter your payment information.

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