USC Welcomes Kenneth McGillvray
Vice Provost of Global Initiatives

by Judy Hartwich, Senior Associate Director, Office of International Services

Kenneth McGillvray was appointed Vice Provost of Global Initiatives in September, 2010, and I had the privilege of speaking with him this January about his time thus far at USC and the wealth of experience and leadership he brings to the University.

At the time we spoke, Dr. McGillvray was preparing for a trip to India, led by President Nikias and hosted by Mr. Ratan Tata, a USC Trustee. The delegation includes members of the Board of Trustees, selected deans and faculty and key senior administrators. The group will be meeting with key Indian stakeholders in higher education, business and government as well as visiting a number of institutions of higher education.

USC has the largest number of international students of any university in the United States including a large number of Indian students. India is very important to USC’s global plans, and the Viterbi School of Engineering already has an office in Bangalore, and USC will also open an office in Mumbai in March 2011. USC Indian students and alums currently in India are assisting with the plans for this trip.

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Welcoming Dr. McGillvray
(Continued from page 1)

Dr. McGillvray earned his B.A. in English literature at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada and holds a Ph.D in literature from the University of London.

Prior to Dr. McGillvray’s role at the Association of Pacific Rim Universities, he served a vice president, academic for the Raffles Education Corporation, headquartered in Singapore. The corporation is the largest private education provider in Asia and is ranked in the top 10 among private education providers worldwide.

Dr. McGillvray’s teaching and research career spans 25 years and includes undergraduate and graduate teaching and supervision. Throughout his career he has held a number of senior appointments at institutions around the world with responsibilities in academic and administrative services, graduate studies and research, university advancement and internationalization portfolios.

On the personal side, Dr. McGillvray comes to USC and Southern California with his wife, Pat, and 15 year old son, Alex. They live in Santa Monica. “One of the things we love about Southern California is the climate. We do everything there is to do outside, play tennis, cycle, walk, run, play golf. This is certainly the ideal environment for all those activities.”

Please join all of us here at the Office of International Services in welcoming Dr. McGillvray as Vice-Provost of Global Initiatives at USC.
Every spring OIS celebrates the achievements of our graduating international students and also recognizes those students, staff and faculty who illustrated their passion and commitment in supporting our international student community.

This year, the OIS International Graduation Reception and Awards Ceremony will take place at the Radisson Hotel near campus on Friday, April 29 from 4 - 6PM.

OIS will present the following awards: Academic Achievement Award, Leadership Achievement Award, and Faculty and Staff Appreciation Award.

**The Academic Achievement Award** recognizes undergraduate and graduate international students who graduated in December 2010 or who will graduate in May or August 2011.

The eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Undergraduate students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Graduate students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.80
- Students graduating in May or August 2011 will be eligible based upon their GPA as of end of Fall 2010.

**The Leadership Achievement Award** is presented to both international and domestic students who have demonstrated enthusiasm and commitment in serving the international student community as student leaders during the 2010 – 2011 academic year.

**The Faculty and Staff Appreciation Award** is presented to one faculty and one staff member at USC for their significant contributions to the international student community. These are individuals who have shown extraordinary dedication in supporting and assisting international students.

If you or someone you know is eligible for any of the awards above, please download and fill out the appropriate nomination form on the OIS website, www.usc.edu/ois.

OIS invites all USC students, faculty and staff to join us for this ceremony! We hope that you are able to join us in celebrating the accomplishments of graduating international students as well as recognizing the dedication of those who support our students’ well-being and overall success at USC.

If you have any questions about the event or nomination process, please contact the OIS International Program Assistants at intlgrad@usc.edu or stop by our office in STU 300.

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**State of the World**

*Egypt and the Middle East, the Dawning of a New Era?*

Wednesday March 24, 5.00 - 6.30PM

Doheny Library, Intellectual Commons, Room 233

Students from Egypt, Bahrain, Iran, and Jordan will give share their knowledge and perspectives on the current state of affairs in the region. The panel discussion is moderated by Professor Laurie Brand, Director of the School of International Relations.
A Nation in Protest:
Two USC students from Egypt reflect on the recent events in their country

by Judy Hartwich, Senior Associate Director

In the midst of the extraordinary events in Egypt, during which protests across the country lead to the ousting of President Hosni Mubarak, I was privileged to speak with two Egyptian students at USC regarding the events in their country. This is an account of the situation from their point of view and a window into their thoughts and perspectives on February 7, 2011, while the protests were still going on.

Mohamed El-Sheikh is pursuing the Master of Building Science degree in the School of Architecture.

He said that previous to January 25, there had been a groundswell of dissatisfaction with Hosni Mubarak’s leadership. In the first ten years of Mubarak’s 30 year rule, people had felt happy with his accomplishments, but in the last 18 years there has been disappointment and outrage.

He feels that the dissatisfaction stems from the marriage of business interests with politics in Mubarak’s Parliament, interference in the most recent elections, wide scale corruption and the amassing of wealth among government cabinet members, while the huge gap between the wealthy and the poor keeps growing.

Using Facebook and Twitter, Egyptian citizens, primarily of college age, called for a mass peaceful protest in Tahrir Square in Cairo as well as in the other major cities in Egypt. Estimates vary, but some sources say as many as 500,000 people held a peaceful protest in Tahrir Square and in the surrounding streets of Cairo on January 25. The police went into the crowd using tear gas and rubber bullets in an attempt to disburse the crowds. As many as 10 people died on this day as a result.

Mubarak addressed the nation on January 28, pledging to fire the entire cabinet, but in fact all that happened was a reshuffling of cabinet members and positions, Mr. El-Sheikh says.

Through Twitter and Facebook again, a national protest was called for on February 1. This time estimates were that as many as two million people showed up in the main square and surrounding streets of Cairo, and as many as five million country-wide in the major cities.

Two puzzling things happened during the February 1 protests. Many prisons throughout the country set their prisoners free. The Egyptian army pledged to protect the protestors on that day, however before the military was in place, the Egyptian police withdrew all their forces.

Along with the peaceful protests, (and absence of a violent response from the police) there was also widespread looting and theft. This was attributed to the newly freed prisoners, and interpreted by many as Mubarak’s way of saying to the people – ‘if you don’t want my leadership, this is the kind of thing that will happen in Egyptian society.’

Citizens responded to the looting and theft by forming country-wide community watch groups to guard against looting in stores and museums, as well as on private property. These watch groups proved very effective.

On January 28, the government shut down all internet, telephone and cell phone access. A few days later, on February 1, President Mubarak gave a second national speech. This time he promised to not run again for president and to step down in September when his term was up. He called for open discussions with opposition groups, pledged to revise the constitution so that no president would be permitted to serve more than 2 six year terms, and pledged that all elections in future would be supervised by the Courts.

During a three day period following February 1, all communication networks continued to be shut down.
Mr. El-Sheikh says, “At this time, I was very nervous that I could receive no word at all from my family to make sure that they were safe. CNN became my main source of information, whereas before I was getting most of my information through friends and family on Facebook. I feel like the US media did the best job they could in reporting. Anderson Cooper of CNN did his best to capture the enormity and peacefulness of the protests even when under personal attack by the police.

“I hope that one of the many positive results of these protests will be that the people of the US, Israel, and the nations of Europe gain a better understanding and appreciation for the critical role that Egypt plays in the arena of moving towards world peace and shoring up political and economic stability in the Middle East.”

Mohammed Saleh is pursuing the Ph.D in the field of economics in the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences.

“I believe the success of the protests in Tunisia in December served as a catalyst for the Egyptian people to organize a similar protest. It is worth it to know that in the last ten years there have been a series of smaller protests in Egypt, mostly by labor and also by government workers.”

Gathering in public in acts of protest requires courage because under Mubarak’s regime, a gathering of more than 3-5 people can be deemed illegal, and the parties liable to imprisonment. The last large protest in Egypt was in 2008 and is referred to as The 6th of April movement. As in the events of this year, in 2008, Facebook also played a role as many Egyptians participated in the call for a National Strike in solidarity with the workers in the Lower Egypt Delta.

In January, 2010, when a man named Khaled Said was beaten to death for exposing drugs dealing police on YouTube, a protest was organized. To not put people in danger of being arrested for protesting – people stood three to four meters apart for a five mile stretch of the Nile. They all dressed in black and faced the river. The unifying phrase for the group of protestors was “We are all Khaled Said.”

Mr. Saleh adds to Mr. El-Sheikh’s account of the events of January and February.

“At first fire hoses, tear gas and rubber bullets were used to attempt to break up the protests, but by January 28, in the City of Suez, live bullets were being used. These violent actions by the police served to bring even more people out in the streets of the larger cities in the days following January 25.

From Friday, January 28 through Wednesday February 2, when all internet and cell phone communication was blocked, though the demonstrations were peaceful, there were bands of looters and thieves (after the release of prisoners from Egyptian prisons). Two mummies in the Egyptian museum were destroyed (not stolen for later sale). Many people believe that while some of the looters were released prisoners, some were the police themselves.”

On the US response to the protests in Egypt Mr. Saleh says, “At first President Obama called for Mubarak to step down, but over the next days he softened his response encouraging a gradual exchange of power. After Mubarak’s speech to the nation on February 1 about having dialog with opposition parties and making needed changes to the constitution, there was a call to protest every Friday until positive changes are evidenced.”

“As an economist there are a few facts that everyone should know about Egypt and the Egyptian economy. While the Gross Domestic Product has been growing steadily for many years, the economic benefit of that growth is going to small segments of Egyptian society.

“There are now many gated communities in Cairo for the newly rich. Because the poverty rate in Egypt is at 40% and there is 25% unemployment with 40% of the unemployed being university graduates, the newly rich know they are under scrutiny. In Egypt under the present regime, there has been a deterioration of the middle class. The rate of illiteracy in Egypt is at 30%.

“Part of the motivation for the current protests is to move towards correcting these inequities. My wife, who is now studying in Budapest, flew back to Egypt on January 27 in order to take part in the protests. I would like the people of the US to know and understand how much courage and how much optimism is in the hearts of all those who are participating in the protests.”

Mohamed El-Sheikh (L) and Mohamed Saleh (R), two Egyptian students at USC.
The U.S. Tax Season Is Here
And International Connection has all the information!

Filing deadline is Thursday April 15 for California state taxes and April 18 for federal taxes.

Tax information can be found at www.usc.edu/ois, go to ‘Taxes’ section.

Overview

Most non-nationals are liable for taxation on any income earned in the United States from the beginning of their arrival in the US. Income normally includes salary, taxable scholarships/fellowships, income from US mutual funds or US bank accounts, etc. Taxes for each calendar year (in this case, 2010) are reported in the Spring of the following year and tax forms are typically filed with both the US Government (federal) through the International Revenue Service (IRS) and the US state/s in which income was earned. For example, if you earned income in California (CA) and New York (NY) you would file separate state forms for both CA and NY.

*Filing deadline is Thursday, April 15 for State of CA and Monday, April 18 for federal taxes*

Generally, all F-1 and J-1 students and their dependents are considered non-residents (NR) for tax purposes for their first five years in the United States and would file federal form 1040NR (long form) or 1040NR-EZ (short form). Scholars are typically considered NR regarding taxation for their first two years in the United States. H-1B, TN or O-1 status holders who have been in the US for more than 183 days should go to the US Internal Revenue Service site resources (irs.gov) to see if they should file resident rather than non-resident tax forms, specifically Publication 519 (US Tax Guide for Aliens). To determine residency threshold for tax liability, you would use the “Substantial Presence Test” utilized by the IRS. ALL non-residents in F, J, M and Q status and each of their dependents must file federal form 8843, Statement of Non-Residence, each tax season even if no income was earned. You should note that being a resident for tax purposes does not mean resident for immigration purposes.

Received Documents

You will possibly receive in the mail forms to assist you with filling-out your tax forms such as:

- W-2: Statement of income earned amounts from employer(s)

Federal

OIS provides FREE online software called CINTAX to assist USC non-residents with their federal tax forms. It can be accessed through a portal at the main OIS website (‘Taxes’) and will assist you with both filling out the correct federal forms applicable to you (such as the 1040NR/1040NR-EZ and 8843 forms) and generating them. You will need to have either a Social Security Number (SSN) or Tax ID number (ITIN) in order to file your returns. If you are not eligible for an SSN, CINTAX will assist you with filling out a request for an ITIN Tax ID number through form W-7. If you have already visited USC University Payroll Services (UPS) to complete an application for an ITIN for a USC job but have not received the number, contact UPS at payroll@usc.edu for a copy of your signed W-7 to attach to your federal tax forms. If you have received an ITIN separate from USC employment, please use this number on
your tax returns.

Once you have completed all steps in CINTAX, you will print your forms to sign and mail to the address provided by CINTAX. **We strongly encourage you to make copies of all forms and supporting documents and to mail the originals with a tracking number to document receipt.** Please make sure to have all your information forms (W-2, 1042-S, 1099, etc.) before you fill out your tax forms in CINTAX and mail them.

Once your tax forms have been received by the US Government, it is extremely difficult to then file an amended return and CINTAX or OIS would not be able to assist you with this. Of special note is that non-residents are NOT eligible to file their taxes electronically (E-file) but must print and sign hard copies to mail-in. If you are considered a resident for tax purposes, you will need to file forms 1040, 1040A or 1040-EZ, depending on your particular case and, unfortunately, cannot use CINTAX.

**State**

We will offer two free State of California workshops to assist non-residents with filling-out their CA tax form (540NR) this year. You must bring to the sessions your completed 1040NR from CINTAX and all tax forms received in order to participate. Please consult the OIS website for dates/times. These sessions will be your ONLY opportunity to receive assistance with the State of CA form. If you are unable to attend either session, State of CA tax booklets are available at the OIS front desk but we will not be able to assist you with filling out the form.

If you are a resident for tax purposes, you would fill out CA 540 or 540-EZ on your own. You are able to E-file the 540NR or 540NR-EZ.

**Possible Income Exceptions**

1. **Tax Treaties:** Some countries are eligible for varying amounts of income exemption from taxation under tax treaties between their home government and the United States.

   If you were paid through USC and were entered into the USC non-national payroll system (GLACIER) in a timely manner, these treaties would have been applied to your status. IRS form 8233 is what you would use to request a tax treaty and IRS Publication 901 lists current US tax treaties. CINTAX takes into account tax treaty status and will apply it to your tax calculations. Tax treaties only pertain to federal and not state or local taxes. Please go to irs.gov for further information.

   2. **F.I.C.A. Taxes (Social Security & Medicare):** F-1 and J-1 students are exempt from paying FICA taxes for their first 5 years in the United States and these taxes should not be deducted from paychecks. J-1 scholars and researchers are typically only exempt for 2 years.

   If your employer has mistakenly withheld FICA taxes, you must work with them to request a reimbursement. If they will not assist you, you can file IRS forms 843 or 8316 to request reimbursement. Please note that J-2’s with work authorization are not exempt from FICA taxes.

**Important Websites and Resources**

Federal website, Internal Revenue Service: www.irs.gov

- Publication 519 (U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens)
- Publication 901 (U.S. Tax Treaties)
- Form 8233 Request for tax treaty exemption
- Form 843/8316 Incorrect withholding of FICA tax

State of California website: www.ftb.ca.gov

Other state site: www.taxadmin.org/fta/link/forms.html

**Other tax resources**

It is important to know that major tax software packages such as TurboTax and H&R Block TaxCut do not support non-resident tax forms 1040NR or 1040NR-EZ as part of their software so you would not be able to file federal taxes with them. Also these softwares do not take into account your immigration status and will offer you credits, deductions, etc. that are only for US citizens or permanent residents. We do not advise students or scholars to file tax forms based on a fraudulent status and accept reimbursements or tax credits they are not eligible for as it may seriously impact future immigration filings such as for permanent residency.

You can use the services of a local Certified Public Account (CPA) or work with a tax reporting firm (such as H&R Block) if you have complex tax questions and they will quote you a fee for services based on your particular case. They can also assist you with filing an amended return if you mistakenly submit an incorrect form and have to re-file.

**Please note, the staff of the Office of International Services is not trained or licensed to answer questions concerning your tax situation or offer any tax related advice. USC students and scholars should consult tax professionals for specific tax advice.**
With the Cricket World Cup taking place from February to March, I talked to the president of the USC Cricket Club, Tarun Sandhu, a graduate student from India studying preventive medicine and public health, to shed light on a sport few Americans understand!

Q: For those here who don’t understand the sport, how would you persuade them to join in?

TS: Since the sport isn’t prevalent in the U.S., there is always an element of surprise when people find out about the team’s existence. It’s easy to explain the basic concept of the sport to Americans using baseball as an example, but after the initial orientation it’s a very hard task as the game is never shown on national TV or covered by the media. I do feel that Americans love sports that involve risk, a theatrical element and a glorified image. Cricket offers most of these things, but all the groundwork needs to be done on the school level to get young athletes involved.

Q: How has the USC Cricket Club fared so far?

The Cricket Club has been active since its formation in 1992, but officially since 2003. The team got recognition from the Southern California Cricket Association (SCCA) and started recruiting students to participate, becoming the first indigenous college team to register in the league. In 2009, USC Cricket was rewarded for all the hard work when it won the SCCA divisional title for the first time. Later, it added to the success by going undefeated in the 2010 edition of the Winter League T-20 tournament. And finally, amongst 32 national schools, USC finished sixth on the final rankings after the national championship in Florida.

Q: How often does the team play?

The team plays in national and regional matches from January to October, over thirty-six weekends a year. We also play in the intra-USC Cromwell Cricket League, which involves 200 students every year, played every Friday at Cromwell Track from 6-11pm.

Q: What is your most memorable team moment?

My most memorable moment was representing the team at the National Championships last year. I had worked tirelessly to get the team national recognition and even to get USC to notice cricket as a big sport. It was very satisfying for me personally to see a squad of fourteen USC students all dressed up in the USC Colors taking on the other cricket teams in the nation.

Q: What is the club’s international make-up?

A majority of the students are from India and Pakistan, but we have had participants from other commonwealth nations including Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.K. Americans, have shown mixed interest, mostly it’s been curious baseball players.

Q: Do you think cricket helps students hang onto part of their culture that is not so prevalent here?

Definitely, I have played more cricket here than I did back in India. Cricket offers students a chance to

Continued opposite
A Helping Hand: How to Volunteer at USC
by Benjamin Logan, OIS Intern

For some students, coming to college is an opportunity to temporarily escape from the real world and enjoy a brief indulgent lifestyle. For the vast majority of students studying at USC, however, college is a time to not only grow intellectually and professionally, but also personally. One of the ways that both domestic and international students are choosing to grow personally is through volunteering throughout the Los Angeles area, the United States, and the rest of the world.

Volunteer work offers students a chance to enhance their education beyond what they learn in the classroom through gaining experiences helping the community and various charitable causes. Some students choose to volunteer in fields that mirror their classroom learning, bolstering their education by immediately applying what they are learning to real world situations. Other students are using charitable work to gain new skills and challenge themselves.

How Can I Get Involved?

USC offers numerous options for getting involved in charitable work. The most immediate option available to most students is becoming a part of an on campus club or association. At USC there are nearly 300 student run organizations that are involved in volunteer work in some capacity. These groups range from cultural associations to religious groups to academic departments. A complete list of these groups can be found at http://sait.usc.edu/stuorgs/index.html.

In addition to these groups, USC has volunteering opportunities that are not limited to those with similar background or interests, but are open to anyone affiliated with the university. The USC Volunteer Center provides students with the chance to become involved in charitable work near and far. The Volunteer Center is best known to students for organizing the Alternative Break Program, which gives students unique experiences volunteering throughout the world. They currently conduct volunteer programs in a diversity of places ranging from Baltimore to Belize.

While larger international volunteer trips may be appealing, financial and time constraints prohibit many students from being able to take of these opportunities. With this in mind, the Volunteer Center compiles a continual list of short-term volunteer projects in the greater Los Angeles Area. These range from tutoring K-12 students to community beautification projects. For more information go to http://sait.usc.edu/volunteer/.

USC Cricket (Continued from page 8)

socialize and relax in a somewhat alien culture. With the burdens of being an international student, which include your academics, financial constraints, and cultural dissimilarities, cricket on campus is a shrine for most students. The fact that over 100 students register with the club every semester is testimony to that!

Q: What does the future hold for the Cricket Club?

The future for cricket on the college level is great, with more and more clubs promoted across the US. With millions of dollars being spent on football and basketball, the school should also look into promoting the more ubiquitous sports like soccer and cricket as well, which are ranked as the top two sports in the world in terms of viewership. Our aim is to have a system where USC is recruiting student athletes involved in cricket and offering them scholarships of some sort to play for the school. For more info go to www.usccricket.com
Travellers Tales

International Program Assistants tell of their adventures near LA and far away

Whale-watching in California

by Marcia Rubin, International Program Assistant

As a Program Assistant at OIS, I get many opportunities to explore the area around Los Angeles. This January, I went out on a catamaran with a group of twenty-one international students with the hope of sighting gray whales as they migrate south from Alaska to Baja, California. It was my first time on this kind of excursion and I was excited at the prospect of viewing such beautiful creatures in their natural habitat.

After travelling out about five miles, my desire was realized: there was a gasp as we spotted the first glimpse of one, rising from the water at the prow of the boat. In all, we found and followed three beautiful, majestic gray whales as they swam along the coast. It was unreal to see such grace in these behemoths, sparkling as the sun hit the deep, blue Pacific ocean.

Whales have the longest migration of any animal and different species of whales migrate at different times of the year. No matter what the season is you’ll have a chance to see them in Southern California, which is directly in their migratory route.

Not only did we see whales on this excursion, we also saw hundreds of dolphins! We found a huge group of them swimming along a current, hunting for fish. They swam so close to the boat, and we were able to get face to face with them through an underwater viewing pod that allowed you to watch the dolphins on a parallel level. It was truly amazing to watch them dart through the water, while others emerged fully to twist in the air.

We were at Dana Point, which is well-known for having extremely large numbers of dolphins, due to its especially deep waters, home to the types of small fish that dolphins eat, like sardines.

In addition to the whales and dolphins we also saw a couple of sea lions and flocks of sea gulls and pelicans. It was exhilarating to watch the birds soar over the ocean, plucking fish from the water.

Southern California has several ports to choose from, and scores of companies that provide whale and dolphin-watching excursions. We chose Captain Dave’s Dolphin and Whale Safari, operating out of Dana Point, and would fully recommend the experience.

Dana Point itself is a gorgeous area along the coast situated about 40 miles south of Anaheim and 60 miles north of San Diego. We would have liked to explore the area more but Captain Dave allowed us to stay out longer than the scheduled tour and we had to drive straight back to campus.

The longer I live in Southern California, the more I understand why it is an international vacation destination. There are so many things to do and see, whatever your interest, and the weather is amazing year-round. That’s why instead of travelling somewhere out of state lately, I’ve been exploring my own backyard!
First-hand tips for travelling in Costa Rica

by Jenna Markowick, International Program Assistant

For years, I had been dreaming about exploring Costa Rica’s lush green rain forests, active volcanoes and picturesque beaches. Finally, this past December I set out with friends to backpack this Central American country in the two weeks we had for winter break.

I’m an experienced traveler and I live for adventures, so planning for this trip was minimal. I arrived in Costa Rica carrying only my Lonely Planet Guidebook and directions to the hostel I booked for my first night in San Jose.

Here are some travel tips that aren’t in the guidebooks. While lots of people speak English in Costa Rica, it really helps to speak or understand basic Spanish. You will earn the respect of the locals, who call themselves “Ticos.” Tico’s are friendly and helpful, and respect travelers who give Spanish their best effort.

Secondly, Costa Rica is a very adventurous destination, but don’t expect to be signing waivers before climbing volcanoes or saddling up on a horse. My friends and I, who haven’t been on a horse in years, booked a horseback riding trip expecting some guidance or a brief lesson. When we arrived for the tour, there were 3 horses tied to a tree on the beach with a guide who didn’t speak a word of English. No lessons, no information, nothing! Needless to say we were not adequately prepared. Thankfully, the guide ended up being an excellent navigator and we had a priceless opportunity to practice and improve our Spanish.

Give yourself plenty of travel time to and from each destination. While local buses are more budget friendly, they can be extremely time-consuming. If you have some extra cash or are on a tight travel schedule, direct shuttles are the way to go.

Last but not least, talk to locals and other travelers to find some “out of the guidebook” tips on places to visit. My friends and I were lucky enough to discover a wildlife rescue facility 20 minutes from San Jose called the Toucan Rescue Ranch. It was an incredible opportunity to explore a place off the tourist path.

Tourists will commonly hear the expression “pura vida” as a greeting, farewell or conversation. It has a few simple meanings that translate to ‘cool,’ ‘full of life,’ and ‘living is excellent and beautiful.’ Use it freely as many travelers find it a perfect phrase for describing their Costa Rican experience.

I visited La Fortuna, Playa Tamarindo, Mal Pais, Montezuma, Parque Manuel Antonio and San Jose, and I recommend them all! Travelers can tailor their trip to hike volcanoes, zip-line through the jungle, rapel waterfalls, snorkel or dive reefs, or just relax with monkeys on the beach. If you’re looking for a once in a lifetime adventure, Costa Rica is an ideal destination for an audacious spirit. Remember to keep an open mind, be safe and enjoy your travels, pura vida!

Jenna Markowick and friends riding in Costa Rica

Upcoming Events from OIS

March

24 – State of the World: Egypt and the Middle East, the Dawning of a New Era? Panel discussion, Doheny Intellectual Commons Room, 5.00-6.30 PM

26 – Hawaiian Luau: our International Diners’ club will attend the annual luau hosted by USC’s Hawaiian Club.

April

21 – OIS’ Annual Reception and Awards Ceremony for Graduating Students: USC celebrates graduating international students.

26 – Pakistani Diners’ Club Event: For the final event of the year, we’ll travel to Artesia and experience Pakistani food, culture, and shopping.
International Students Enjoy Whale Watching on January Outing

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University of Southern California
Student Union 300
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