

# ***Bridging Borders***

International Friendship Program

**PURDUE**  
UNIVERSITY

## **IFP SPRING EDITION 2017**

Dear IFP Hosts, We hope you are enjoying springtime in Indiana in all it's glory!

***Bridging Borders*** is the new name of the new IFP newsletter. In this issue, meet Joseph and Joan Briller, Ryan and Amanda Busch and Pam Beenen, IFP hosts who are making a difference this semester.

We can't tell you how much we value our partnership with you and our joy in hearing and passing along your stories of friendships bridging borders. Enjoy this issue!

*Beth Tucker & Wendy Medbourn*

IFP Coordinators

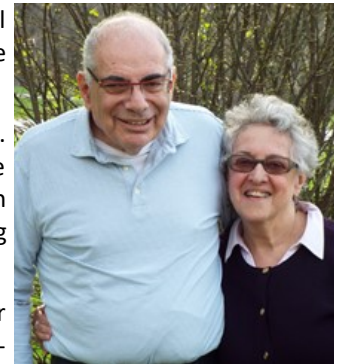
### ***Coming Aboard***

It's a long way from New York City to West Lafayette. After 23 years of welcoming visitors from all over the world at ***Big Apple Greeter***, Joan and Joseph Briller have landed in West Lafayette to be close to their daughter, Dr. Sherylyn Hope Briller, a professor of anthropology, and her family.

***Big Apple Greeter*** is a welcoming organization where volunteers take visitors on neighborhood walks. For visitors to NYC it is finding a new friend in the big city. Joe can tell many stories of friends he made during his many long years of Big Apple Greeter service that he's still in touch with today. In recognition of his service, Joseph was honored as a recipient of the Mayor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service to the City of New York and a Big Apple Greeter of the Year.

Joseph admitted to having concerns about finding a place to serve in their new home. But after meeting with IFP Coordinators, Beth Tucker and Wendy Medbourn, Joan and Joseph quickly discovered that IFP was the perfect fit.

Their new mission is to use their experience to serve in any way possible. We are very thankful that Joan and Joseph chose us! They are eager to host new students, and Joseph now serves as the new editor of ***Bridging Borders***. Joseph welcomes your contributions of interesting anecdotes and heart-warming experiences with your students. Please send your stories to [jjbriller@gmail.com](mailto:jjbriller@gmail.com) and [friendship@purdue.edu](mailto:friendship@purdue.edu).



### ***Keeping It Real***

On February 26th, host families, their students and IFP staff gathered at Purdue Village for an evening of food, fun and fellowship. After great pizza, desserts, and a lot of friendship bonding, we participated in several rounds of ***Keep It Real***. This fascinating game encourages players to share their feelings, thoughts, opinions, and life experiences in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Happy memories, adventures and occasional misadventures poured out as all realized they were among friends. We learned a lot about self-awareness and how other cultures think differently than us.

There were lots of laughs, shared feelings and affirmative support when appropriate. The clock moved ahead quickly as it so often does during those special moments of great enjoyment. All too soon the room was filled with the goodnights of those happily anticipating the next IFP event.

## Our Host Families In Action

Students all over the world face new challenges when studying abroad. For Amanda and Ryan Busch “study abroad” meant befriending eight students from five countries in their home and into their hearts. Over cookie baking, computer experiences, meeting the horses and a traditional bonfire with hot dogs and marshmallows, their home became a welcoming beehive for fun and bonding.

Starting with Host-A-Boiler over winter break, Amanda and Ryan became happy participants in what IFP is all about—helping international students relate not only to campus but to American life as well. They offered friendship, a taste of family life and a momentary escape from the stress of studies. It means a lot for students in IFP to have a friend in a new country to turn to and to experience a warm welcome in their second home.



The “Bausch Bunch”



Anna Busch with her new friends!

What the Busches found exciting was the bonding they felt with their students and how much they learned about five very different cultures. Equally exciting was how eight grad and undergrad students from India, Singapore, China, Pakistan and Vietnam bonded with each other—the older students passed on advice to the younger students. Sometimes just chatting and sharing feelings can ease stress.

Amanda emphasized that they learned as much if not more from their students. Amanda encourages those she knows to get involved in IFP. It’s easier than you think to reach out and welcome students. Just be yourself and offer what you do best. Students so often demonstrate their appreciation in return.

It is not always easy to adjust to studying in a new country and adapting to new culture. A warm IFP welcome and being there for students goes a long way to bridging boundaries and inspires us all.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### MAY

- 1-5 Final Exams
- 12-14 Graduation/Commencement
- 16 [PURE Indian Students](#) Arrive!
- 18-20 Indian Hospitality Dinners

#### JUNE

- 6 UREP-Colombian Students Arrive!
- 9 IFP Colombian Welcome Picnic
- 16 [Mandela Washington Fellows](#) Arrive!
- 23 MWF MATCHBOX Reception

#### JULY

- 8 MWF Hospitality Dinners
- 17 Hosts/Students Fall matching begin!
- 28 MWF Closing Ceremony

#### AUGUST

- 9-18 New students arrive
- 21 Fall classes begin!

#### SEPTEMBER

- 7 IFP MIXER, PMU South Ballroom!

## Pam Beenen, IFP Host Award Recipient

Each spring since 2014, the International Friendship Host Award has been given to an IFP Host who has gone above and beyond in extending a Boiler welcome to international students. This year’s recipient is Pam Beenen! Pam, a single, moved to Lafayette in 1991 to start a career in nursing. Though she knew about IFP for several years, she didn’t think it was for her. But as she learned more from friends, she decided to give it a try in August 2012. To this day, Pam has had eleven students and she is still in touch with her second student, Jing Su, now working in Chicago. Currently, Pam is matched with three students and



**Pam with Vikita and Dasika** she loves that she ‘inherits’ their friends too. They attend activities on campus, meet occasionally for dinner, and have gone to holiday dinners with Pam’s friends.

Vikita from India and her friend, Dasika, invited Pam over for Indian food recently. “I learned how to make chai the *correct* way,” Pam says, “and I always learns something from our conversations.” Pam also enjoys being matched with Colombian students (“I LOVE the Colombians!”) that come for six month stints (arriving June 6 this year). Last summer Pam also was paired with a Mandela Washington Fellow (arriving June 16 this year) which was great fun. “I highly recommend getting involved with IFP! You’ll have a blast!”

**Beth and Wendy are looking for 15-20 dinner hosts for May 18 and 15 for July 8, also 30 hosts for Colombian students arriving June 6 and staying for six months. Contact us at [friendship@purdue.edu](mailto:friendship@purdue.edu) or at 765-494-9225.**