



# PACIFIC BRIDGES

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Newsletter of Princeton in Asia

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## VOICES FROM THE FIELD: STORIES AND REFLECTIONS

*With all 168 of this year's PiA fellows and interns now on the ground thriving in their fellowship posts (or back on campus from their summer internships), here at the home office in Princeton we are continuing to savor the stories they are sending back about the new sights, sounds, tastes and smells they are experiencing all over Asia, and their reflections on the learning experiences, embarrassing faux pas, and "aha!" moments that go along with those new experiences. From the first-time teacher learning how to manage a classroom of eight-year-olds to the second-year fellow adjusting all over again to a new city and culture, their words serve as eloquent reminders of the importance of PiA's mission of building bridges and providing young people with transformative experiences in Asia. We hope you enjoy these dispatches from the field as much as we have.*

### **From PiA Fellows in the Field:**

I promised myself that I would climb at least one volcano during my year in Indonesia. So after a busy week of writing and copy-editing and spending way too many hours sitting behind a computer screen, it was time to head to Jogja and climb a volcano and be outside. This is where packing the night before leaving for Indonesia came back to haunt me. Don't climb volcanoes in Converse! They are not hiking shoes. Also, pack a headlamp, because you never know when one could come in handy. With fellow Jakarta fellow Chloe in tow, we started the climb at 1 a.m. and were back down at noon. I should really start going to the gym more often because I was in pain for about a week. But in the end, watching the sun rise while sitting on a volcano and hearing the call to prayer drift up towards us, the hike was totally worth it.

*Lydia Tomkiw, The Jakarta Globe, Jakarta, Indonesia*



*Lydia Tomkiw and Chloe Hall at the summit of Gunung Merapi, a volcano near Yogyakarta, Indonesia.*

Nepal is phenomenal. I love working for Save the Children – the child rights approach, their theory of change, my co-workers, even the education proposals I'm writing are all interesting, exciting and engaging. I feel productive at work, and I'm learning an incredible amount. It helps that I got to go into the field to Rolpa District right off the bat. All my proposals for work have been based on my experience and meetings with the stakeholders there, and

this makes the whole writing process much more meaningful and enjoyable as I've seen the situation on the ground, talked to the kids, visited the schools, and met the teachers.

*Kasey Koopmans, Save the Children, Kathmandu, Nepal*

I really love being at a school where there is always so much going on and where students are always excited to see me and will yell "hello teacher Jenny!" across the campus or hallway. It's cute and fun most of the time, and as

long as I can somehow manage the kids that can't understand what I am saying!

*Jenny Moyer, Prince Royal College, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

What has been truly surprising and great is how welcoming the Thai people have been to me. They are always so kind and have offered so much to me. Recently I sat with a neighbor to read an English newspaper and

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## STORIES AND REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

he was just so happy to be able to sit with me and ask me questions about vocabulary. People here are truly happy when you give them a little bit of your time.

*Lan Truong, R35 School,  
Bangsak, Thailand*



*Lan Truong with her student at Rajaprajangroh School 35 in Bangsak, Thailand.*

I would have to say that the students at MFU are very unique. Each day is a new and exciting experience for me and I owe it all to my students. It seems no matter how hard I try to prepare myself for the day's lesson, there is always something that one of them brings up or does that I simply could not expect. They are what make this job fun and worth doing.

*Chris Colonna, Mae Fah Luang  
University, Chiang Rai, Thailand*

Last weekend I journeyed to Purworejo, a small town about an hour west of Yogyakarta, to visit a local high school that was hosting an English overnight camp. The schedule included a spelling bee, a talent show, speeches on "The Beauty of Indonesia," and millions of photographs with the



*Chris Colonna poses with Buddha in  
Chiang Rai, Thailand.*

bules (foreigners). The kids were unbelievably sweet, excited, and respectful. They wanted to practice their English (asking if I'd seen Kung Fu Panda 2), sing songs about love and God, and look carefully at my blue eyes.

At the camp I experienced something I have encountered multiple times already in Indonesia: I was there as a volunteer, to help out and lighten the load of the Indonesian teachers while exposing the students to the accent and vocabulary of a native speaker. Yet, I ended up feeling like it was an event to honor my foreign friends and me. My hope for my remaining 11 months in Indonesia is to show people that I am not worthy of being treated like a celebrity because of my fair skin or "tall nose" or the supposedly morally loose society I was born into. Rather, I am looking to foster meaningful relationships with Indonesian friends based on mutual respect and interest. I have the beginnings of these friendships here, with foreigners and Indonesians alike, and I am eager to see how they grow and strengthen over the next year.

*Elisabeth Springer, Atma Jaya  
University, Yoyakarta, Indonesia*



*Elisabeth Springer with high school students at an  
English camp in Purworejo, Central Java, Indonesia.*

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## STORIES AND REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

After a month in Kathmandu, it's time to head to the mountains! Tomorrow, I depart for an 18-day expedition to Imja Lake, the highest glacial lake in the world, in the Khumbu (Everest) region of the Himalaya. The expedition will bring together a team of scientists and researchers from across the globe for a "mobile workshop." After the trip to Imja Lake, we will return to Kathmandu for a four day knowledge-sharing and writing workshop.

During the trek, I will add my two cents about water management/hydrology and assist with the workshops, but my main responsibility will be as a member of the Social Media Team where I will contribute to the Expedition Blog and disseminate information to our media outlets, including The New York Times, National Geographic, and ABC. It should be really fun work!

For me, the experience is really once in a lifetime. The opportunity to work with experts from across the globe on climate change adaptation, with a focus on water issues, is absolutely incredible. Can you imagine the fireside conversations that will happen in the upcoming weeks? And the fact that this will take place during an expedition in the Khumbu (Everest) region of the Himalayas is mind-boggling. In fact, a day trip to Everest Base Camp is included in our itinerary. Wow.

*Katalyn Voss, The Mountain Institute, Kathmandu, Nepal*

### **From PiA Summer Interns:**

I am extremely grateful I had the opportunity to intern with BROAD, since it gave me a new perspective on what I want to study when I get back to Princeton. As with any internship, I found meeting co-workers was just as important as learning new things.

*Kevin Lin, BROAD Air Conditioning, Changsha, China*

I really enjoyed the abstract learning I experienced at PSI. Yes, the technical skills will prove helpful as I continue my psychology courses, but I learned the most about the structure of the organization, the relationships inside it, and the challenges and victories it faces. It was a really interesting dynamic, and I'm glad to have had the time and opportunity to talk with others and learn from their experiences and thoughts.

This is my advice to future interns: try new things. It took me a while to put myself out there and seek interesting things to do, but once I did, it was so worth it. Just in terms of food, I've had some of the best culinary experiences of my life in Hanoi, eating jellyfish, snails, and more traditional Vietnamese dishes.

*Shannon Wu, Populations Services International, Hanoi, Vietnam*

My favorite part of my internship was living in Indonesia and getting to know some fascinating people. Journalism is the perfect way to explore a new city and culture – it's a license to seek out new experiences, ask questions, and talk to anyone. I found people to be incredibly open and warm, and many of them were just as interested to meet an American in Jakarta. That made it easy to make some great local friends, even with people I first met through an interview for the Globe.

*Lauren Zumbach, The Jakarta Globe, Jakarta, Indonesia*

When asked what I'll miss most about my summer internship, the answer is easy: the people. One of the Chinese interns from Peking University texted me the other day and asked me to send him the picture of "our family," and when I realized he meant the NRDC family, I was really touched.

*Iris Zhou, NRDC, Beijing, China*



*Lauren Zumbach with a team of paramedics she shadowed on Jakarta's public ambulance service, while working on a story about emergency medical care in Indonesia.*

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## STORIES AND REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

*(continued from page 3)*

I want to thank PiA for giving me the opportunity to travel to Yangshuo, China, before I took part in the 2011 Summer of Service. On one level, it allowed me to explore a country that I am trying to better understand. On another level, it forced me to embrace a brand of independence that paved the way for a major summer of growth. While my time on Summer of Service hugely impacted who I am and how I view the world, I don't think that it would have had such a strong effect had my solo traveling not set the foundation for it. I am heading back to campus a different person.

*Cameron White, Summer of Service,  
Jishou, China*

One of the most valuable and slightly unexpected outcomes of the Earth Week curriculum taught during the Summer of Service was our engagement with the local people of Jishou. Not only did we become more aware of the environmental issues within the city, but we also attached a sense of community to those concerns. When I order my dinner at one of the restaurants the Level Earth students interviewed, the owner and I flash one another a knowing smile when I politely decline her disposable chopsticks. Similarly, anytime our students and I pass one of the trash collectors on the street, we share a more personal sense of

who they are, what their lifestyle is like and the unique perspective they carry in understanding the environmental issues in Jishou. Overall, Earth Week in Jishou was an exciting and enlightening experience!

*Helen Reveley, Summer of Service,  
Jishou, China*

Earth Week proved to be a huge success among the teachers and students. Students offered many suggestions (such as avoiding disposable chopsticks), and these discussions always stimulate thoughtful debate. As the summer winds die down, we are hopeful that our students are going to continue the environmental discussion long after we have left.

*Nikolai Kapustin, Summer of Service,  
Jishou, China*

I loved becoming part of the NAZ family – from the kids to the office staff, NAZ has a welcoming and inclusive environment that I loved being a part of. Everyone here works toward a common and admirable goal, and everyone understands that and each other. My favorite memories of the office will always be with the kids and my co-workers, either at lunch or carpooling home or just around the office. I'll never be quite sure the day I finally felt like I belonged – but I will never forget that feeling – the NAZ Care Home really is a family worth belonging to.

*Dora Huang, NAZ Foundation, New  
Delhi, India*



*Cameron White sports his helmet during the  
Summer of Service in Jishou, China.*

### ***PiA is Hiring!***

PiA will be hiring an additional Program Director for next year. And who better than PiA alumni to go on the PiA dole?! If you are interested, please contact the office for a job description and for further info.

## STORIES AND REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

### *Voices from Second Year Fellows:*

After living in Manila for one year, I returned to my native San Francisco for two weeks. A friend had stark advice. He said my world in the States was moving on without me and reminded me that the longer I stayed away, the more difficult it would be to come back. I know he's right. Still, I have no regrets about staying in the Eastern Hemisphere another year. Even as I slip into a few routines, I still get surprised in the best way.

Last year, the pedicab (a type of bicycle-powered rickshaw) I always take to work was overturned in a collision. Instead of asking for my insurance information, the other driver looked in my eyes and asked, "How are you?" Afterwards he kept texting just to check-up on me. Last month, a colleague sent out an apology email for a slip-up. Senior management responded with an encouraging email about learning from our mistakes. Last week, in the early morning, blurry-eyed call center agents walked me out of their way to guide me to the right bus stop. Last night, I enjoyed one the best karaoke sing-offs with the seven-year old granddaughter of my host parents. She always wins.

I think deciding to travel means choosing to see the best in your situation and location, since after all, you willingly put yourself there. It calls for perpetually learning as you take stock of your surroundings – and of course being open to new tastes, people and surprises every day. When I think about where I would be now if I had remained in the comfortable familiarity of San Francisco, the choice is easy. I would make the same one again in a heartbeat.

*Katherine Visconti, ABS-CBN Broadcasting, Manila, Philippines '09-'11*



*Hannah McBride joins the wedding of a friend in Penang, Malaysia as a ji mui (bridesmaid).*

Leaving Penang, I came off quite the whirlwind of emotion. In the fall, a co-worker asked me to be a *ji mui* (bridesmaid) for her wedding in May, a few weeks before our post was up. She and I became pretty close because of all the running around we did for the wedding: fittings with her mother who was making our cheongsams and planning the Chinese-Malaysian version of a bachelorette's party called "hen's night" with her and her sister. I felt taken in by their family, like a little sister, calling her parents Uncle and Auntie like I'd known them my whole life.

It meant a lot to me to be included in all their wedding traditions, from the rituals at the bride's house the night before the wedding to the family tea ceremony led by an old Nyonya auntie, and especially the ridiculous heng tai games, a series of goofy tasks we bridesmaids had to think up for her husband (with the help of his groomsmen) to do to prove he was worthy of marrying the bride. They even had to pay

the bridesmaids off with ang-pow, the traditional red envelopes stuffed with ringgit! The weeks after the wedding, it was all kuih and teh tarik and watery-eyed goodbyes. I left Penang in early June and came straight to my second PiA year in Chiang Mai, where I've started to settle down.

The two cities are more alike than different, but the lifestyles are different in ways I hadn't expected. To me, Penang is like my hometown of Kansas City: a comfortable place with friends and family that will always have a place in my heart. Chiang Mai is like Boston, where I went to college: a pretty swag place – given its lively art/music/fixe-gear-bike scenes – that has challenged me in ways I haven't been challenged before. Clearly I'm still figuring out my place here in Chiang Mai – namely, learning a language with a script that looks half-cartoon, half-doodle and tones that have totally owned me (and my indolent ears). More than anything I feel lucky that PiA has given me the chance to experience two very different lives in the same region back-to-back.

*Hannah McBride, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia '10; Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand '11*

## PIA STAFF DOES ASIA

As my PiA post at Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Center (CHP) concludes this week, I'm writing to thank you for all the warm support and energy you have given me in the past two years. This one-of-a-kind opportunity was instrumental to my personal and professional development, and was made possible thanks to Princeton in Asia and the work that its all-star team put in.

*Napatra Charassuvichakanich, Cultural Heritage Protection Center, Beijing, China*

"Ever since I landed in Burma I've had a hard time articulating what exactly I am feeling or am experiencing. I went to a school for the blind where I saw blind kids playing hallway soccer. It was amazing how good they were and how much fun they were having at a school that's so poor they barely have enough to eat. It's silly but I feel like I'm blind-folded on a roller coaster. Everything and everyone in Burma has a fascinating story, and I feel every emotion here. I feel excited, hopeful, confused, doubtful, overwhelmed with positivity, and overwhelmed with questions."

*Mariesa Mason, Timor '09 and Program Director*

"Hello from the land of sambal and little green arrows on your hotel ceiling that point in the direction of Mecca. Here were some of the highlights from my trip so far.

- Fellows teaching me the intricacies of the step-by-step process by which an Indonesian guy asks a girl out.
- Grilled corn on the beach while watching the sun set over Sabang.
- Nailing a really good lead for a teaching post which could be our first foot back in Aceh.
- Discovering they aren't lying when they say -20 degrees fahrenheit in Mongolia.
- An alumni in Seoul teaching me how to use his toilet, which, if you request it to, will sing you a song while you pee.
- Korean BBQ, which involves grilling thick strips of pork on a burner in the middle of your table while simultaneously taking shots of soju.
- Watching our fellow in Chiba, Japan sing songs and do the duckie dance with his five-year-olds while they all shouted "Anh-sensei! Anh-sensei!"

It's good to be back!"

*Fiona Miller, Indonesia '09 and Program Director*

"Ni hao from Beijing! Yesterday I observed a microloan distribution ceremony in an abandoned classroom in rural Shaanxi Province, where there were 20 farmer women in attendance who were excited to receive their first loans! Then on my flight to Beijing I was seated next to an 80 year-old woman from rural Shaanxi. It was her first flight ever and she was excited to see her nation's capital with her son. She rested her hand on my lap for most of the flight, rubbed my arm hair for good measure. A good China encounter to kick start a busy day."

*Tina Coll, China '08, Hong Kong '09 and Program Director*



*The PiA Staff ready for take-off in their Air Asia bowling shirts.*

"We had this morning to sight-see in Singapore, so I took Emilie Pooler to Chinatown and we checked out the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple. The highlight was watching a tiny, hunchbacked, ancient Chinese grandma teach her little grandson how to bow to the Buddha statue. She was on her hands and knees jabbering brightly in Chinese, and the boy's dad turned to Emilie and me and explained in English that 'the experienced one was teaching the young one'. It was really cute, and reminded us of the value of cultural exchange."

*Megan McGowan, Thailand '06 and  
Regional Manager- Singapore*



## PIA EXPLORES TAJIKISTAN

*Fiona Miller, Indonesia '09 and PiA Program Director*

This past July, I spent three weeks traveling through Central Asia on a PiA reconnaissance mission. I was conducting a site evaluation in Tajikistan to scout new posts for PiA and meet with potential partners there, with the goal of launching a program – and having fellows on the ground in-country – by the summer of 2012. If you're thinking I landed the coolest job this side of the Oxus, you're right.



*Fiona Miller makes friends with local vendors at a market in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.*

For PiA, the idea of expanding our Central Asia program to Tajikistan had been two years in the making. The trip was organized by Peter Poullada, Princeton class of 1975, chairman of the PiA Bay Area Alumni Committee, Central Asia aficionado and a member of the Bridges to the Muslim World Committee of the PiA Board of Trustees, which provided the impetus for moving into Muslim communities in Asia, including the 'Stans. Peter has also been the driving force (and main sponsor) behind PiA's Central Asia Initiative, which has spurred PiA to expand into western China, Mongolia, Kazakhstan and now – hopefully! – Tajikistan. So with a song about lamb kebabs in our hearts, a group of 13 of us embarked on a three-week journey through Tajikistan, complete with a five part lecture series that Peter had prepared, meant to supplement a 500-page full academic syllabus. No one ever said business travel was easy.

Tajikistan is a small, landlocked country of 7 million people, 40 percent of which are estimated to be under the age of 14. Nestled between Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and China, Tajikistan is the poorest of the post-Soviet states and is unique in its ties to Persian language and culture and its history of civil war. There are few foreign businesses and expatriates in the country, and no Peace Corps volunteers.

This makes it a perfect place for PiA. Not only would a Tajikistan program significantly and meaningfully increase the depth and breadth of the portfolio of posts PiA offers to our fellows, but it would also push our programming out into the "spokes" of the wheel of development. As Asia continues to develop around us at warp-speed, PiA is constantly seeking new opportunities to move further out into the unplowed corners of the continent, where our fellows still have the chance to live immersed in a local culture and become a part of the communities they serve, away from the globalizing effects of Twilight, Skype, and peanut butter. Tajikistan is this corner.

Here PiA fellows could study Persian or Tajik while they teach computer and presentation skills to graduate students in Dushanbe, or could live among Tajikistan's Ismaili Muslims while working in community development in the Pamir Mountains, eyeing the Afghan border across the Panj river. From my visit, it was clear to me that PiA had caught a very special place in Asia at a very special time in history, and the sooner we could get fellows there, the better.

Over the course of my trip, I was able to meet with seven potential partners in both educational institutions and NGOs in two different cities in Tajikistan, and all of them were promising. As PiA works this fall to solidify the opportunities and negotiate the challenges of launching a Tajikistan program, it is with the goal of sending PiA fellows to live in the communities I visited and continue the cultural bridge-building that has been at the core of PiA's mission for 114 years. And if I'm as lucky in 2012 as I was in 2011, I'll get to go visit those fellows next fall. Don't be too jealous.



*From the banks of the Panj River in Khorog, Tajikistan, you can look across the border into Afghanistan.*



*A mosque at sunset in Khojand, Tajikistan.*

## DISPATCH FROM LAOS

*Alex Godfrey and Hannah McDonald-Moniz, Vientiane College, Vientiane, Laos '10*

As teachers of students young and old, we regularly saw how our students would struggle to read. “Lao people don’t like to read,” is a common refrain. How could so many people feel so confident in making such a blanket cultural statement?



*Alex and Hannah with a friend at the trivia night fundraiser event on August 6, 2011.*

Perhaps similarly, many of our students struggled with creativity. We asked our young learner students to concoct the best and craziest toy they could imagine, and then to draw it. They looked, puzzled, at their blank papers. Some more endeavoring students tried to meticulously copy the kite or beach ball in their notebook and name it “Kite” or “Ball”. Others simply copied their friends.

These collected observations led us to admire the Lao-run organization Big Brother Mouse, which we first encountered on a trip to Luang Prabang. The people of Big Brother Mouse describe their organization as a literacy project set out to “make reading fun.” They write, illustrate, and publish educational books that range from whimsical to cultural to informative. Many of them are bilingual in Lao and English. While some of these books are sold to tourists who give them away to villagers they meet on treks, Big Brother Mouse also hosts “book parties” in rural villages. In a typical book party, Big Brother Mouse staff members give art lessons, teach children and adults how to read books, and play educational games. At the end of the day, each person gets to choose a book to keep

(quite likely the first he or she has ever owned) and a mini-library is established for the village. In a country with a paucity of creative energy and interesting reading material, we couldn’t help but feel that Big Brother Mouse was doing just what was needed.



*The cover of Polar Bear Visits Laos, one of the books that Alex and Hannah’s trivia night fundraiser will sponsor.*

One day over lunch, we had the idea to host a trivia night fundraiser event to sponsor the publication of a book for Big Brother Mouse. The idea came as the product of the observations that (1) expat trivia nights were fun, (2) a previous event had successfully raised a large sum of money for a separate organization, and (3) Big Brother Mouse relies almost solely on external donations to fund printing costs and book parties. It wasn’t the first time that we had dreamed up some big idea like this, but after a little bit of deliberation we thought we could make this one happen. For the month prior to the event, we worked hard to put it all together. We amassed raffle prize donations from businesses all over Vientiane, designed and hung posters, and wrote questions for the trivia night.

On August 6th, 80 people arrived at Vientiane College to participate in our eight-round trivia competition, complete with drinks, food, and over \$600 in raffle prizes (including some pretty sweet Beerlao umbrellas). We tested their knowledge in a diverse set of categories including “Children’s Literature,” “Animals,” and “Religion.” The crowd-favorite was certainly the “Five Senses” round, in which participants had to identify herbs by smelling them, guess musical instruments by hearing them, and name Asian beers by tasting them.



*Children enjoying their new books at a Big Brother Mouse book party in the village of Ban Somsanouk, Laos. This book party was supported by Alex and Hannah’s fundraiser, and donated a total of 243 books to the children of Ban Somsanouk.*

Through the sale of entry tickets, raffle tickets, and drinks, and with the help of online donations solicited from family and friends, we raised over \$3000 for Big Brother Mouse. This money is being used to sponsor the printing of two books, *Dinosaurs!* and *Polar Bear Visits Laos*, as well as two book parties. With deep appreciation for everyone who supported this cause, we hope that some kids (and adults) in rural Laos will discover a new life-long love of reading and creativity.

***To find out more about Big Brother Mouse or to support the cause, check out their website at <http://www.bigbrothermouse.org>.***



## WORDS OF THANKS FROM PIA'S INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENNY VAN NIEL

What a gift I've been given to have the opportunity to "run" PiA for a few months! Of course, we all know it's the fabulous PiA Program Directors and staff that do all the work, but I've had the chance to become more intimately acquainted with an organization that I first knew as an undergraduate at Princeton more than 25 years ago – and to discover that PiA is even better from the inside out. Meeting the fellows and the interns reminds me of the excitement I still feel discovering new corners, foods, and traditions in Asia.

Asia has been the most consistent thread in my life. I grew up in Hawaii watching wayang kulit performances behind a sheet in my backyard and eating Indonesian *gado gado* and *ristafle* prepared by our Indonesian friends. My first job in high school was teaching karate at an electronics factory in Penang. The day after I was married I moved to Tokyo for five years, and the last corporate job I had was based in Hong Kong running Human Resources for a company with offices in fifteen countries in Asia.

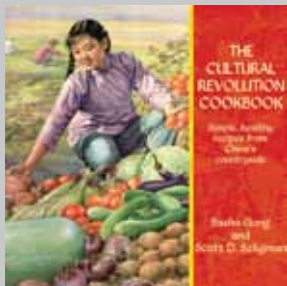
So how did all the years I spent in and around Asia shape me? I talk more slowly than most New Yorkers, I listen more than I speak, I eat everything (though I still don't like durian or natto), I try to understand before I judge and I have an addiction to the stimulation that comes from seeing and hearing and doing new things. Most of all, I have a deep and abiding love of Asia. I hope my small contribution to PiA helps foster this big love in Asia for our fellows. As Anastasia returns with Kiki (PiA 2032!) in tow, I will be moving to Hong Kong to be another PiA "friend" to fellows and traveling staff. Come visit!



*Penny Van Niel enjoys a bowl of noodles atop Big Buddha Mountain in Hong Kong.*

## BOOKS WRITTEN BY PRINCETON IN ASIA AUTHORS

### The Cultural Revolution Cookbook, by Scott Seligman '73 and Sasha Gong



On the face of it, a book about food during China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution – an era when there wasn't enough of it to go around – seems a somewhat absurd proposition. The 17 million young people Chairman Mao ordered to the countryside in 1968 by and large felt that leaving their education behind to work side by side with the peasants was a tragic waste of their productive years. One of the things that they actually did learn from the peasants, however, was how to make do with what there was. They learned to cook with fresh, wholesome foods that were in season and to prepare remarkably tasty and healthful dishes with enough nourishment to get them

through long, arduous days in the fields. This is a book of their recipes, which also recounts the Cultural Revolution through stories and period art.

Author **Scott Seligman '73** was posted as a PiA fellow in Taichung, Taiwan from 1973-1975. He writes: "I learned Chinese cooking as a PiA fellow in Taiwan and I thought I was pretty good at it until I met Sasha Gong, my co-author on the cookbook. Sasha was a veteran of the Cultural Revolution, spent a good deal of it in the countryside as one of Mao's "sent down youth" and has an instinctive grasp of ingredients and techniques. I learned a lot as her *sous chef* on this project! We think the book will resonate not only with folks interested in China, but also those focused on eating locally grown, preservative-free, healthy food. There are few prepared ingredients in the recipes, and virtually all the ingredients can be bought at any well-stocked supermarket."

*To learn more about The Cultural Revolution Cookbook or to purchase a copy, please visit [www.culturalrevolutioncookbook.com](http://www.culturalrevolutioncookbook.com).*

### Coming Soon:

Shaun Rein (China, ?) recently wrote *The End of Cheap China*, in which he interviews people from all walks of life in China. Shaun tracks economic and social changes in China, and analyzes how these changes will affect the world. It is in the pre-order stage, and can be purchased on Amazon.com.

## ALUMNI NOTES

### PiA on the Job

**Morgan Galland** (Laos '06) graduated from Stanford Law School in June 2011. She is now clerking for Federal District Judge Amy Berman Jackson in Washington DC. Looks like PiA alumni have someone to turn to for legal advice after nights of too many Singapore Slings.

**Sarah Butsch** (Thailand '06) just started her second as a Physical Therapist, and she is still enjoying every bit of it!

After charming PiA friends, fellows and alumni as a keynote speaker at the 2011 PiA Annual Dinner, **Brett Dakin** (Laos '98) has become Assistant General Counsel at the Rainforest Alliance.

**Reid Fritz** (China '10), **Michelle Capobres** (China '97), **Amelia Salyers** (Thailand '08), **Julia Peppiatt** (Vietnam '08), **Emma Starks** (China '08), **Teresa Velez** (Japan '07) and **Aron Bothman** (China '07) gathered for an impromptu PiA happy hour in San Francisco, where they shared delicious Thai food and Singapore Slings.

CNNMoney.com just made a great business decision to hire **James O'Toole** (Cambodia '08) as a reporter. Look for his financial reports this fall!

Congratulations to **Lorri Anne Carrozza** (Laos '01) who started her new life as a foreign service officer – and a married woman! – in September.

**Ed Finn** (Hong Kong '02) recently finished a Ph.D. in American literature and has settled down with his wife, Anna, in Phoenix where he has started a fellowship at Arizona State University. Ed swears Phoenix is just as weird as Kowloon or Chiang Mai, and has the same awesome food.

After a summer split between working with high-schoolers in China, visiting family in

Minnesota and experimenting with new cocktail recipes in Philadelphia, **Kai Even-son** (China '06 and former PiA Program Director) started work with the University of Pennsylvania this fall. He promises to start stockpiling his home-brewed beer for interviews in January.

Making the transition from Asia to Africa, **Laura Sennett** (Hong Kong '08) has left for Nigeria to work as the Program Manager for the Modernization and Professionalization of the Nigerian Customs Service.

While in Kentucky working on clean energy policy and diversification away from coal, **Kristin Tracz** (Thailand '04) and **Van Meter Pettit** (Thailand '89) connected as PiA alumni. It's a small world after all.

### Still Living the Dream in Asia

**Leise Hook** (Thailand '10) is working at a photography art centre in Beijing, China. She is an International Affairs Officer, and works with international artists and foreign media for events and exhibitions. And when she is not working, she is busy putting her PiA teaching skills to use by teaching English to kids!

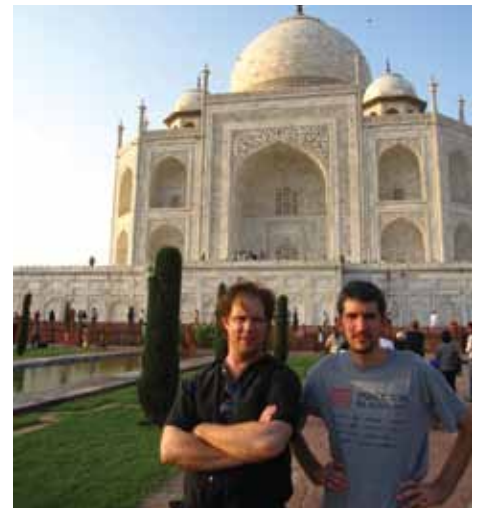
Back from a year and a half in Liberia, **Helen Smith** (Philippines '07, Indonesia '08) was on a mission to find a city in that has readily available good Vietnamese food. It looks like nowhere made the cut, because she has just accepted a job with BCG in Jakarta to jump into the world of consulting. She is thrilled to be going back to Asia!

**Max Robinson** (Vietnam '08) has made his way from his PiA post in Ho Chi Minh City to a private equity firm focused on Indonesia. He is living in Singapore and plans to stay in Southeast Asia for the long haul. Yee-haw!

**Luke Douglas** (Indonesia '10) and **Coco Lammers** (India '09, Nepal '10) moved to

Singapore in September to get started on their next Asian adventure.

Not one to miss an alumni event without a good excuse, **James Smrikarov** (Kazakhstan '08) spent the year in India working with Afghan teenagers in Jalandhar, Punjab through YSEL Program with the American Councils. He is now back state-side, but hopes to return to India in February. Catch you in Delhi, James!



*James explores the Taj Mahal.*

Having remained in Seoul since her post, **Hannah Bae** (South Korea '07) will be moving on from her current job and starting a new position with public affairs office at the US Embassy, where she will be monitoring Korean media reports and editing translations of news stories. Do we sense a PiA Korea lifer in the making?



*Hannah Bae prepares for a Korean BBQ.*

*(continued on page 11)*

## ALUMNI NOTES (CONTINUED)

### Not Too Cool for School

**Michael Migliacci** (Singapore '97) is currently in a MFA program in Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. Close to Asia, but not quite.

**Kerry Brodziak** (Thailand '10) made a big move from the Land of Smiles to the Land of pulled pork and Southern charm to get her Masters in Social Work at UNC-Chapel Hill. She misses Asia, but is excited to be working at UNC with Burmese refugees who have come from Thailand.

**Terryl Dozier** (East Timor '10) soaked up his last summer of freedom before hitting the books at the Harvard Graduate School of Education to study International Education Policy.

The fusion of cultures in South Philadelphia has inspired **Julie McWilliams** (SOS '07, Laos '08) to write her dissertation on refugee communities in Philly and the effects of the economy on their educational trajectories and support networks. Julie's work remains proof that we don't have to go to Asia to experience our favorite Asian cultures.

**Matt Losch** (Thailand '05) spent the summer traveling through East Java and Thailand, where he enjoyed the great warung food and being "volunteered" to teach English classes. He returned to the States in August to study at The Yale School of Management.

After three years on PiA, **Annie Preis** (Thailand '07, Indonesia '08, Carrie Gordon Tribute '09) returned to the States to study law at NYU. Asia, law school ... Asia, law school ...

### Growing the PiA Family

**Kate Thirolf** (Malaysia '03) is about to start the biggest adventure of her life (yes, even bigger than teaching and living in Malaysia). This fall Kate is looking forward to welcoming a little newborn into her home. Congrats Kate!

**Sarah Stein** (China '97) is enjoying some quality time with the newest member of her family while she is on maternity leave. Simon Cohn arrived this past summer 2011.



*Simon Cohn*

**Brian Vogt** (Indonesia '96) and his wife Laura are proud to announce the birth of their son, Ian Vogt, on November 10, 2011. The family is doing great and can't wait to introduce him to the PiA family!



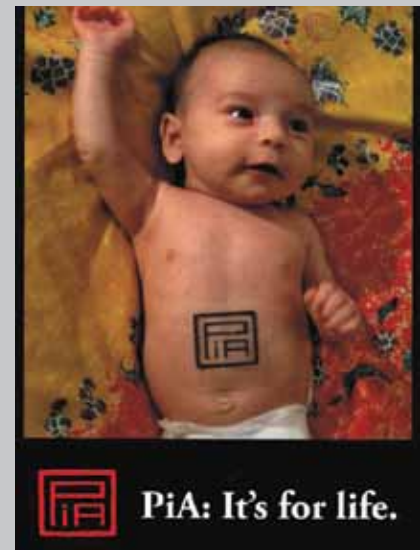
*Laura, Brian and Maya welcome Ian to the world.*

## GIFTS OF THE SEASON

**Anastasia Vrachnos** (Indonesia '91) welcomes the latest addition to the PiA staff. Kiki T. Vrachnos arrived August 18, 2011 just in time for the earthquake and hurricane Irene. At three months now, she is already earning her keep writing follow-up notes to her debut in the Annual Fund-drive (**HINT! HINT!**). Don't you want a thank you note from Kiki?



*Settling in to the Executive Director's chair with mom.*



*Kiki's debut photo shoot for the PiA postcard.*

 **PiA: It's for life.**





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**Upcoming events for PiA alumni:**

**January 7-8, 2012**

Interviews held at Princeton University for  
South and Southeast Asia

**January 14-15, 2012**

Interviews held at Princeton University for North, East,  
and Central Asia

**February 1-5, 2012**

West Coast and Midwest interviews and alumni events in  
Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and Chicago.

**May 18-21, 2012**

PiA Orientation at Princeton University

**May 21, 2012**

PiA Annual Dinner at Princeton University

*We hope you can join us!*