



CIVIC

Council for International Visitors
Iowa Cities

THE CITIZEN DIPLOMAT

CIVIC's Quarterly Newsletter

WINTER 2017

Visitor Recap: From December 2016 to March 2017 CIVIC hosted 34 international visitors through the IVLP and On-Demand Embassy Programs from 7 different countries, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Cambodia, Cote d'Ivoire, China, Russia, India, Brazil, and Indonesia.

Programs Hosted: We've hosted programs on a diverse range of topics, including: Agricultural Journalism (Russia), Religious Dialogue Influencing Foreign Policy (Afghanistan and Pakistan), Understanding Transgender Issues in the U.S. (India), Reporting Tour for German Journalists: US Election 2016, Young Political Leaders: an Inclusive Electoral Process (Brazil), and Political Activism, Community Organizing, Lobbying, and Campaigns (Indonesia).

Other Events: On September 15th, CIVIC hosted its WHAT EVENT. and the opportunity to thank those who have labored to promote international cooperation with a vision to fostering a more peaceful world over the last three decades! Congratulations to AWARD WINNERS. They were recognized for their dedication to CIVIC at the WHAT EVENT!

CIVIC volunteers, board members, and staff worked the Northside Oktoberfest on Saturday, September 24th, earning a \$750 donation from the Downtown District.

What's New at CIVIC? If you haven't renewed your CIVIC membership, please do so today at iowacivic.org! Membership dues sustain the vitality of our organization and play a critical role in maintaining our operational capacity.

New Information about CIVIC

Thank you to the following CIVIC volunteers for their help with August to November programs:

Newman Abuissa, Asih Asikin-Garmager, Ken Atkinson, Tom Baldridge, Liz & Alan Bergeron, Peg Bouska, Madeleine Bradley, Emily Brekke, Connie Butterfield, Jean Cadoret, Ann & John Christenson, Denes Gazsi, Gleidson Gouveia, Doug Hansel, Brandon Jennings, Devon Jensen, Donanciana & David Jiruksa, Don & Suzanne Kirchner, Martha & Bob Kirby, Jane & Ron McMullen, Steve Merkel Hess, Ari Natarina, Elena Osinskaya, Concepcion Piragine, Amanda Potterfield, Ken Royar, Paula & Omer Sanan, Dave Tiffany, Heru Widiatmo, Frank Wildensee, Lillian Winters, Mike & Christy Weitz, and the CIVIC staff & interns!



Description of the picture. Should we feature the Law Enforcement delegation?

Visit Profile:

Young Political Leaders: a Project for Brazil

- Visited the Johnson County Transportation for Persons with Disabilities organization to discuss their efforts to transport people with disabilities to Election Day polls
- Met with Fred Schuster, Regional Director of Senator Grassley's office in Cedar Rapids, IA
- Exchanged ideas with the UI College Republicans and Democrats about engaging young people in politics
- Met with the leadership of 50-50 in 2020 to discuss advancing gender parity in elected offices
- Enjoyed a Home Hospitality Dinner with David and Donna Jiruksa as well as a dinner with Omer and Paula Sanan



NEW PICTURE NEEDED



NEED A NEW PICTURE

Member Profile



Ann & John Christenson

Ann and John have been members of CIVIC for ten years. Ann holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Studies and is retired from a career in public relations and journalism. She has traveled to all 50 states and seven continents. John graduated with a master's in library science and was executive director of a nine-county public library system in south-central Minnesota before retirement. They have two children and three grandchildren.

"It's important to us that visitors have a successful and enjoyable experience here." -Ann Christenson

Why did you join CIVIC?

We joined because we like to learn about other cultures and because we enjoy meeting folks of diverse backgrounds and interests.

What do you enjoy about engaging with CIVIC?

It's important to us that visitors to Iowa City have a successful and enjoyable experience here. We know from our own travels that spending time with locals makes a huge difference in the pleasure of a visit.

What visit has been your favorite and why?

Perhaps the most memorable experience we've had was when we hosted a Japanese visitor for a weekend. We were told that he was a teacher, but it turned out that he was a school librarian. It was a good fit because John is a retired librarian and both our adult children work at the Coralville Library. Our daughter had taught in Japan for a year. Her children, about the ages of his junior high students, related well to him and he asked them to advise him on book purchases to take back to his school, which they were delighted to do.

Connect

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BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS



Indonesian Delegation meets Joni Ernst
at pre-election meet and greet in
Marion, IA.

Partners

A Note from the Executive Director

CITIZEN DIPLOMACY & the U.S. Elections

Although we now know the outcome of the 2016 presidential election, the foreign policy direction and priorities of the new administration are still unclear. **What is clear** is that citizen diplomats' work to foster mutual understanding across national borders, promote international cooperation, build global professional networks, and contribute to the global cultural education of community residents and area students will be as important as ever.

One way that we can prepare to strengthen the reach of our impact is to expand and diversify CIVIC's base of citizen diplomats across age, gender, sex, religion, orientation, race, color, ethnicity, ability, and class. This would serve to enhance our programming by strengthening our ability to share and celebrate the diversity of American life and culture with international visitors. **And**, it has the potential to build a more inclusive community at home. Will you join CIVIC in building global ties by working locally to expand and diversify our community of citizen diplomats?

What can you do?

- **Join one of the CIVIC working committees** (Communications, Membership, Fundraising) to brainstorm with other globally-minded members about how we might raise CIVIC's profile across our community, grow and diversify our membership, and strengthen our financial profile in order to expand our work. These committees meet monthly.
- Can't volunteer, but want to support CIVIC financially? **Consider sponsoring a membership** for a student or community member.
- Already an active volunteer? **Invite a potential member to join you on a volunteer shift** to experience the power of exchange.
- **Contact your congressional representatives in Washington D.C.** to advocate for smart policy—a policy that supports international exchange programs. Please visit <http://iowacivic.org/advocacy> for a template letter that includes the current budget requests and information about how the IVLP program turns every \$1 of federal tax dollars into almost \$6 thanks to the work of volunteers like you!

For more information about how you can build global ties locally contact Executive Director Jo Butterfield at civic@uiowa.edu or visit <http://iowacivic.org>.

Members of the business community may demonstrate their commitment to building global ties locally by joining CIVIC's Partnership Program. Details on supporting citizen diplomacy, building the global cultural competency of their staff, and forging global networks may be found at: <https://iowacivic.org/partnership-program/>.

- Executive Director, Jo Butterfield