



Madison International Partners' Newsletter

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Staying Warm and Engaged in the Brutal Wisconsin Winter!

By Jean-Rene Watchou, MIP Executive Director

Madison International Partners ended the year 2018 strongly by raising \$ 21,000 through its "Giving Tuesday" and End of Year Campaign. We would like to thank all our generous donors and supporters for their invaluable support to MIP and its mission of creating a welcoming and vibrant global community in Madison. We are looking forward to another productive year in 2019! One of the things your support does is allowing MIP to be a warm presence for internationals in the midst of the Wisconsin cold winter

Indeed, winter in Wisconsin can be cold and brutal. That's exactly what this winter has been so far: heavy snow falls; freezing rains, and polar vortex that created icy roads and sidewalks. For many internationals, it has been a new experience as many come from places that are warmer than Wisconsin. So, in addition to the challenges such as culture shock, language barrier, and making friends, they have to cope with cold weather, which makes their adjustment to life here even more challenging.

At Madison International Partners, we recog-

nize these challenges and try to make wintertime in Madison warm, and as much enjoyable as possible for internationals through our committed volunteers who extend a warm hand of hospitality and friendship to internationals. Indeed, our volunteers help internationals to prepare for winter by providing advice on little things such as how to dress properly in winter, where to find second hand winter clothes, and how to stay active in the winter. Of course they also offer their friendships and help internationals to understand that if they are well prepared for it, they can really enjoy the season. One thing some of our internationals have enjoyed doing during the polar vortex was the "hot water challenge" which consist of tossing a cup of boiling water into the air an see it crystalize into ice and snow before it hits the ground.

MIP has made it possible for internationals to enjoy winter with activities such as sledding, skiing, or cooking and sharing delicious meals at International Cooking and Dinner, or giving back to the community by volunteering at Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin.

More enjoyment on the way with spring coming soon!



10 Things You May Not Know About Madison International Partners



[By Jenny Green, a Madison community advocate.](#)

Everyone craves human connection, but our international students, visiting international scholars and other internationals living in Madison may need companionship and the chance to develop deeper relationships even more than most. I recently sat down with Jean René Watchou, the Executive Director of Madison International Partners, and he spoke to me about the programs and the people it was created to serve.

1. Madison International Partners (MIP) is a non-profit organization in Madison, that extends welcome and hospitality to internationals, helps raise global awareness, promote in-depth, cross-cultural exchanges between Americans and internationals, and foster better understanding between people of different races, cultures, religions, and social backgrounds.
2. MIP offers a dozen of programs and activities that serve about 2,500 international visitors, refugees, international students, visiting scholars, their spouses and children each year in Madison.
3. MIP provides Madisonians with a variety of meaningful volunteer opportunities while at the same time forging connections with the broader world community and stimulating an atmosphere of welcome, inclusiveness and respect for diversity in Madison.
4. Madison International Partners is governed by a Board of Directors which is comprised of 10 members. Day to day programs and activities is led by the Executive Director who also oversees a team of more than 100 volunteers who put in more than 4,000 volunteer hours a year.
5. MIP programs and activities are children friendly.
6. One of MIP's most popular programs is English Conversation Time which is an informal gathering of internationals and Americans for English practice, friendship, and cross-cultural exchanges. It meets every Friday from 6 to 8 pm at Christ Presbyterian Church, 944 E. Gorham Street.
7. On the fourth Saturday of each month during the academic year, MIP organizes International Cooking and Dinner which the Wisconsin State Journal labelled the "Best kept dinning secret in Madison" and which offers an opportunity to cook together and share culture and food from all over the world, and fellowship.
8. MIP runs a Citizenship program that helps lawful permanent residents (people with green cards) to become US citizenship.
9. Madison International Partners works in partnership with trusted partner of higher educational institutions in Madison such as the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Madison College (MATC), the Wisconsin English as a Second Language Institute (WESLI), and other non-academic partners, which include the Dane County Literacy Network, Open Door for Refugees, and the Catholic Multicultural Center.
10. There are a variety of ways to get involved in whatever capacity you have, whether you want to attend a meal, befriend and help an international to practice English, host an International student at your Thanksgiving meal, or pick up a new international student and help them settle in their dormitory or apartment.

The Interns' Corner

Reflection of Fall Semester by Olivia Smith

I was so fortunate to have the opportunity to work alongside such a thriving organization that provides programs that cater to the International Community here in Madison. As a Social Media and Graphic Design Intern, I have worked mostly behind the scenes on flyers for event and improve designs on the website., but also had the opportunity to interact with participants to MIP programs and activities. It has been such a rewarding experience just to engage and learn from others about their culture and understanding of US and beyond. I look forward to continuing this spring semester and start new projects such as creating an Instagram account for MIP.

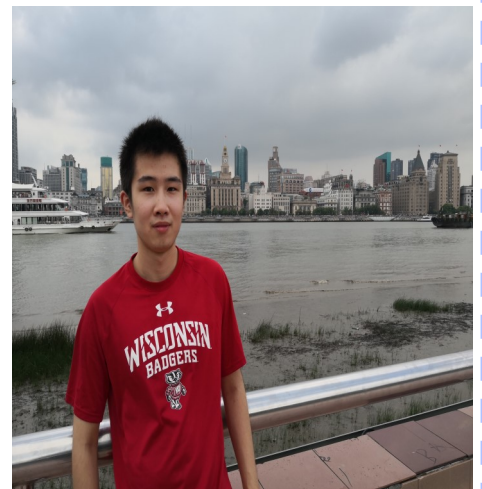


Reflection of Fall Semester by Laura Hietpas

Madison International Partners exists to invite everyone to the table, particularly those who are different from the majority here in America. To have been a part of such an incredible example of love and inclusion in our community was such a privilege, and I am so grateful for all of the wonderful experiences that I had through this project.

Meet Tiger Wang, MIP New Outreach Intern

My name is Tiger Wang. I am an international student from China. I am so excited and honored to be a student intern for Madison International Partners this semester! I am a sophomore at UW-Madison studying history, sociology, and education. I decided to apply for MIP because of its goal to bridge the international and local community. I also want to be part of this process and make Madison a second home for our international friends. Programs and activities here also give me valuable experience in working with people of different cultural backgrounds. In my free time, I love to read some good books and watch the new-released movies. Hope to have a wonderful internship experience with Madison International Partners this semester .



International Friendship Program News

YU and I

By Jenna Schroeder, MIP Volunteer

This past fall I was asked if I had any interest in participating in an additional program with Madison International Partners called the International Friendship Program. I had already been volunteering once or twice a month at English Conversation Time, but was excited about the new opportunity to create a closer bond with an international student. I myself was an international student in college when I studied abroad in Salamanca, Spain. I remember how each and every connection I made with a native Spaniard helped me not only better my communication skills, but also helped me feel more comfortable in such a new and unfamiliar environment.

I have been matched with a UW Law student, Yu, from Shanghai, China. We have already exchanged not only many hours of quality time, and some of our favorite activities with one another, but also many laughs and memorable moments. Last fall we went apple and raspberry picking, where Yu tried her very first cup of Wisconsin apple cider and purchased a jar of apple butter for the road.

A few weeks later, we spent an afternoon cooking—she taught me the ropes of using soy and vinegar in Chinese dishes, and I introduced her to one of my favorite acorn squash recipes. We've since gone hiking with one another several times, and we took a stroll through the holiday lights at Vilas Zoo, where I was able to meet her boyfriend, Kai, that was visiting from China.

A few weeks ago, I introduced Yu to swing dancing—a newer hobby of mine I began about a year ago. She even got some video footage, which was kind of fun to watch since I'd never seen myself swing dance before. Even when we were out and about, Yu did not hesitate to strike up a conversation with any of my friends while I was on the dance floor—I was proud to see her so fearless in yet another new setting. I am eager to continue helping Yu connect to the Madison community and take full advantage of everything this city and the Midwest has to offer throughout her year visiting the US, which I have no doubt she will do. I have been thrilled to learn more about a culture I wasn't so familiar with a year ago, and am grateful Madison International Partners has helped flourish a beautiful new friendship into my life.



Internationals Give Back to the Community

On Saturday, January 12, 2019, MIP brought a group of 10 people to volunteer at Second Harvest Foodbank as a modest contribution to the fight against hunger in Southwestern Wisconsin. The group volunteered for a total of 30 hours, which has an equivalent value of up to 2,075 meals. What a great way for internationals to give back to the community!



Why I love Volunteering for MIP

By Nancy Dreckschmidt, MIP Volunteer

I was first introduced to English Conversation on Friday nights by a friend about 3 years ago. Even though I often am uncomfortable around people I found that making others less uncomfortable made me less uncomfortable. In the realm of speaking foreign languages, many people would rather swim with sharks. I found a bit of a calling in helping to make a little sea where people would not have to worry about being eaten alive. I love it when international people ask questions or make comments about their perceptions of various things: Madison, the UW, American culture and customs. I love to ask questions about them and their home country or even their hometown. My “students”, so to speak, help me as least as much as I help them.

During the course of attending English Conversation, I became aware of various other activities that are sponsored by Madison International Partners. One in particular intrigued me, a night where people cook food from their home country to share with others. Eating home cooked food with others and enjoying a good time was right up my alley.

When I looked at the size of the kitchen at Christ Presbyterian Church, I thought, “Oh my, we’ll have plenty of space for cooking people can really spread out. Oh how wrong I was. The number of people willing to participate astounds me. It is truly elbow to elbow. When we have a lot of participants it can get a little crazy; chaos reigns, yet people remain good natured. There are sometimes last minute runs to the grocery store for missing ingredients. People often wander around with a lost or confused look on their face. It’s my job as a volunteer to help them out. It can get a bit hectic when 4 people all need something at once. It makes me wish I was better at multi-tasking. The cool thing for me is that sometimes I can hear at least 6 different languages being spoken and I love to try to guess which ones. I am known as the “rice lady” but I have also helped make dumplings, stuffed grape leaves, curry, even sushi. I sure hope Jerry forgives me for all those rice cooker pans he has had to clean.....

Even with all the chaos, thanks to the concerted effort of a whole lot of people, we get the dinner out more or less on time. And what a spread it is! People take a prodigious number of photos of all the delicious food. Invariably, my eyes are bigger than my stomach and I can barely finish everything on my plate. I want to try everything. It is truly a great gift that Madison International Partners is willing to purchase all the ingredients for the cooks.

What impresses me the most is what happens after the dinner. So many participants not only help with cooking, they even help with the clean-up. There is a saying in English which goes “Many hands make light the work” and nowhere is this truer than the way people work together to spruce the place up again.

If you would like cook something from your home country (and yes that does include Americans), meet people from all over the world (and their yummy home-cooked food), or just have a nice dinner and chat with someone you have never met before, this is the place for you. I have met many of the students I tutor through either English Conversation Night or the International Cooking and Dinner. It has really brought joy and a sense of purpose to my life.

I also want to give a true “thank you” to Jean-Rene Watchou. This man puts a tremendous amount of effort into Madison International Partners and you really can see it when he is at the International Cooking and Dinner. It usually is a 12 hour day for him. I bet he sleeps really well when he gets home.

Well, enough of this long-winded essay. This is just the experience of one American volunteer. If you’re interested, check-out the Madison International Partners webpage: <https://internationalmadison.org/>

Focus on Finances

By Rachel Janke, MIP Board member & Treasurer

We are excited to see that MIP's financial health has been increasing this past year, both in terms of funds raised and the creation of a solid financial management system and policies. In September 2018, Madison International Partners (MIP) and Christ Presbyterian Church (CPC) entered into an agreement, including a five-year plan, to transition financial and logistical responsibilities as MIP becomes more financially independent. The programs of MIP originated with the international outreach efforts of CPC, which has offered hospitality to internationals and provided cross-cultural exchange opportunities to residents of Madison for many years. In mid-2016, MIP was formed as a 501(c)(3) organization to grow and extend this outreach beyond the church. CPC continues to be a significant source of support for MIP's services in two main ways: through financial contributions to program expenses; and through the time devoted by its Director of International Outreach, Jean-Rene Watchou, who also serves as Executive Director of MIP.

Starting in 2019, MIP will assume direct responsibility for programming expenses, such as purchasing food supplies and paying for transportation, and will begin reimbursing CPC for a portion of the time its Director of International Outreach spends providing services to MIP. The amount reimbursed will increase from \$5,300 in 2019 to \$10,600 in 2020. As long as we can build upon our fundraising efforts, we will increase this reimbursement by another \$5,300 each year.

Our 2019 budget envisions more program growth as well. The table that follows summarizes the 2019 budget adopted by the Board of Directors. Most of our expenses, 56%, are for programming (26%) and other supplies and services (31%), while the remainder of the MIP budget is for staff expenses (44%). Over the past two years, donations from individuals have exceeded \$45,000. While we have also received several grants, over 90% of MIP revenue came from individual donors. Our 2019 expense budget of \$66,300 exceeds the amount of revenue we might typically receive in a year, about \$50,000. We are currently able to support this difference from unrestricted funds donated to MIP over the past two years. However, it is essential that we align annual revenue and expenses, since a budget deficit cannot be supported from a balance of funds indefinitely. Your continued support is needed so that we can expand services to internationals and volunteers, and ensure a secure future for our staff.

Thank you all for your contributions of time and financial support, which set MIP on a strong foundation to provide these valuable services to the Madison community for years to come. If you have any questions or would like more details about our finances, please contact Jean-Rene: jeanrene@cpcmadison.org.

MIP 2019 Expense Budget Summary

	2019 Budgeted MIP Funding	Percent of Total
Expense		
<u>Programming</u>		
English Conversation Time	\$5,400	
International Cooking and Dinner	3,000	
Seasonal, Cross-Cultural, and Field Trip Events	2,400	
Citizenship Class	1,000	
Art Supplies and Games	1,250	
Other Program Expenses	<u>4,000</u>	
Subtotal Programming	\$17,050	26%
<u>Staff Expenses (MIP Only)</u>		
Staff Compensation (Includes Payroll Taxes)	\$16,200	
Program Assistant	6,000	
Interns	6,000	
Professional Development	<u>800</u>	
Subtotal Staff Expenses	\$29,000	44%
<u>Other Supplies and Services</u>		
MIP Payment to CPC	\$5,300	
Childcare	3,750	
Website and Software	3,000	
Audit	2,000	
Insurance	1,000	
Other Expenses	<u>5,200</u>	
Subtotal Other Supplies and Services	\$20,250	31%
Total Expenses	\$66,300	100%



MIP

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Madison International Partners' mission is to extend welcome and hospitality services to internationals and promote in-depth cross-cultural exchanges between Americans and internationals in the Madison community. Through its various programs MIP creates opportunities for global awareness and better understanding between people of different races, cultures, religions, and social backgrounds.

Internationalmadison.org



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