

## Stay Connected!



SJSU-International-House

\*Ask to join our alumni group



SJSUIhouse



SJSUIhouse



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## New Lettering for the SJSU International House

Originally known as the SJSU International Center (I-Center), the program was a renamed SJSU International House in 1997, yet the lettering on the front of the building still reflects the original name.

The I-House has launched its first crowdfunding campaign to help us fund this new lettering project. Help us update the iconic front porch of the House with accurate signage, and promote the I-House to future residents, the San Jose State community, and our neighbors. We need your support!

There are lots of ways you can help:

- 1) *Make your gift today!* No matter how small or large, your gift will bring us closer to our goal and encourage others to give, too.
- 2) Contact your friends and family to share why you are helping the I-House and what it means to you. Ask them to make a contribution to I-House.
- 3) *Share on social media!* A Tweet or a Facebook post of the crowdfunding link will go a long way to help get the word out: <https://power.sjsu.edu/internationalhouse>

As home to approximately 4,000 SJSU students from more than 100 countries over 40 years (1978-2019), I-House has played a memorable role in the experience of students attending SJSU. Our alumni continue to meet each other on their worldwide travels, and every couple of years, I-House holds official reunions in San Jose and around the world.

If each and every one of our alumni donated just a small amount we would far surpass our fundraising goal. Please help us to reach our goal, *Make your gift today!*



## What a Small World

By Martin Ming Tang

Image of Tropical Cyclone *Fani* from airplane window over Bay of Bengal by Varrun Varatharajan (2019)

The first time I flew back to China was a year after I moved to the U.S. The excitement of going home motivated me to pass quickly through the chaos in the SFO Airport, and find my seat in the cabin. As soon as I sat down, I realized a new problem that I had to face before hugging my family members- how to kill the boring 12 hours on the flight! After looking around, I found the guy sitting next to me seem to have the same concern.

I started the classic ice breaking talk, "*Hi, I am Martin, nice to meet you.*"

"*Hey, David, nice to meet you too.*" He stretched out his hand.

Then, we briefly shared our purpose in taking this flight.

He is from San Jose and he had been an exchange student studying at the university in my hometown city. After he finished his studies a couple of years ago, he moved back to California. He was on his way back to China to join the wedding of a friend of his.

He asked, "*Where do you study?*"

"*San Jose State University*", I answered.

"*Wow, I graduated from the same school.*" He was a little surprised, so was I.

That was a non-stop flight. Thus, there is a big chance that one of two people sitting next to each other is from the departure location, while the other one is from the destination location. Then, I also admit that it is not very surprising that both went to the same school. However, what happened next was a big jaw dropping to everyone that I shared the story with after.

"*Where do you live?*" he asked.

"*International House.*" I answered. As an international student, I have been asked this question thousands of times.

"*International House is like a dorm where the residents are...*", like how I usually answer, I started to add more details.

"*Really?*" He interrupted and turned his head more left towards me with a big surprise in his eyes.

*(Story continued on the next page)*

*(Story continued from previous page)*

What's even more unbelievable: It turned out that he used to live in the SAME ROOM where I was living at that moment! I cannot remember how many topics we talked about on the rest of that flight. However, for sure, we exchanged our opinions on food, languages, climates, lifestyles and so on. Of those topics, we have a lot of ideas in common, also lots of different thoughts. Because of those we shared in common, we became more understanding about those differences.

What a small world! We come across strangers every day, especially when taking a trip. On that day, after entering the airport, I was crossing strangers almost every single second. To me, somehow, they were like silhouettes and I would never think of associating myself with any of them. However, I found, among them, there is one who was one of the strangers; one second later, he became my old friend. This just happened between two people who grew up in two totally different environments, two people that might never come to know each other in the entire life. Just because both two have lived in the I-House. All the invisible boundaries are gone.

Since then, every time when on a trip, I always ask myself a question -- do I have any link to the person sitting next to me? No matter where we are from, what age we are, or what skin color we have.

There is no doubt, statistically, it was a coincidence. However, because I decided to step out of my hometown and because I chose to live in I-House, I gave a chance for such a coincidence to happen in my life.



Picture of Martin Ming Tang (Graduated Spring 17)

*End of the story "What a Small World" by Martin Ming Tang*

## How can you contribute to the SJSU I-House?

**Make a Credit Card Donation**  
Giving online is easy & secure  
through the SJSU Tower  
Foundation

*Write a check payable to  
SJSU Tower Foundation.*

*In the memo line, specify I-House  
Crowdfunding Campaign.*

*Mail to SJSU International House,  
360 S. 11th Street  
San Jose, CA 95112.*

**Your**

**Support**

**Counts**

Other ways you can support  
I-House include:

- 1) Follow us on our social media
- 2) Write a positive review on the I-House Facebook page
- 3) Send us a testimonial to post on our webpage
- 4) Contact us to discuss how you'd like to be involved with I-House.

# SJSU International House Alumni Newsletter

Fall 2019

Director:  
Leann Cherkasky Makhni

Community  
Operations Manager:  
Natasha Lamperti



## What Do Alumni Have To Say About The I-House?

### Why 360?

Because it's  
the I-House's  
address

It's the number of  
degrees of a circle

There's an expression.  
"come full circle,"  
meaning to return to  
a starting point.

*We hope this  
newsletter helps you  
come full circle with  
the I-House at  
360 South 11th Street in  
San Jose, California!*



*Víctor López Saavedra* |

The I-House is not only the best place to start never ending, true friendships. It also opens up the space for self awareness and multicultural daily interaction, reminding us how small the world we live in is. May I-House prevail on Earth!



*Swar Shah* |

Spent wonderful 3 semesters here in 2005-06! This is much more than a residential facility. Where else will you get to live with 70 brilliant students from diverse backgrounds and different countries! More than a decade later I still love to catch up with them!



*Aurelia Faudot* |

This place is a second home abroad, and you get to share your daily life, as well as so many good memories, with people from all over the world, that will stay your friends for many years to come.

Make sure to share your most recent contact information with us! Email us at [ihouse@sjsu.edu](mailto:ihouse@sjsu.edu) or fill out our google form <http://www.sjsu.edu/ihouse/alumni/connect/>