USCB
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BEAUFORT

International Programs
NEWSLETTER

Vol. 4 • No. 1 — *The Official Newsletter of the USCB International Programs Committee* — FALL 2023 to SPRING 2025

SPRING 2025

USCB's Emphasis on Japanese Industries and Culture

With the influx of Japanese businesses and culture in the Lowcountry and Chancellor Panu's participation in the Summer 2025 Japan Studies Institute program in San Diego, USCB has made it globally known that they are interested in pursuing more in-depth connection and education with Japanese culture and businesses. Visits from representatives of Japanese businesses including Tripe-E and Jiyunohako have created stronger partnerships and relations for USCB and the community. Link

Summer 2025 Study Abroad/ Away Scholarship Awardees

Scholarships distributed by our **Student Research and Scholarship Committee** benefited many USCB Students traveling around the globe in Summer 2025. With scholarships from $300-$800, these funds helped support students experience life-changing and unique opportunities. Recipients of these scholarships travelled to the Gerace Research Station in San Salvador Bahamas, Poznan University of Medical Sciences in Poznan, Poland; Paris, France; and Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota. Link

Psychology Club Fundraiser – Study Abroad in France

The cost of a study abroad program can sometimes be daunting, especially when other financial priorities may be persistent in a student's life. Our **USCB Psychology Club** understands the value of a study abroad experience and also understands the financial conflict that a study abroad experience may create for our students. That is why in Spring 2025, our Psychology Club hosted a fundraiser to assist in the cost for students studying abroad in France for Summer 2025. Funds were distributed evenly among all students and helped them create amazing memories abroad! Link

USCB Honors – Global & Leadership Training

The **Honors Student Association (HSA)** holds nominations and elections each Spring semester for students serving in the active organization the following academic year. 2025-2026 HSA Inductees experienced a Global & Leadership Training, led by **Dr. Babet Alvarez**, at the A9 Hot Pot & Korean BBQ in Bluffton, SC. This was the first time many of our inductees' experienced Korean cuisine and discussed Korean culture. Experiences like these begin to build the branches of Global Studies. Link

USCB Chancellor Selected for Japan Studies Institute

Dr. Al Panu, USCB's Chancellor since 2015, was selected to participate in the prestigious Japan Studies Institute (JSI), a program that facilities the integration of Japanese studies into institutions. From June 2-15, 2025, Dr. Panu attended the program hosted at San Diego State University. He engaged with other higher-education personnel in seminars, cultural activities, and off-campus excursions to explore Japanese history, culture, and contemporary society. Link

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International Presentation – Evan Calabrese

SKALE participant and USCB ***Secondary Education – English*** major **Evan Calabrese** presented research from his experience in the SKALE project at the Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference held at Emory University's Oxford College. His presentation was titled, "Words Across Cultures: What Kimchi Can Teach Us," highlighting just a snippet of his work and experience abroad. Link

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TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Fall 2024 International Trivia

122 Sand Sharks participated in the 2024 International Week Trivia competition! Do you know the answers to these sample questions? *(Answers are at the end of the newsletter)*

1. **Which city is made up of 7 islands which were originally separate from each other?**
   a. Bangkok, Thailand
   b. New York City, New York
   c. Mumbai, India
   d. Venice, Italy

2. **What is the most forested country in the world?**
   a. Brazil
   b. Russia
   c. Chad
   d. Greenland

3. **What is the tallest mountain in Africa?**
   a. Mount Kilimanjaro
   b. Mount Meru
   c. Mount Everest
   d. Mount Kenya

4. **Which country has the most pyramids?**
   a. Egypt
   b. Mexico
   c. Sudan
   d. Peru

5. **How many countries make up North America?**
   a. 3
   b. 9
   c. 15
   d. 23

International Week – Fall 2024

November 18-21, 2024 was a lively week for the USCB campus, as it celebrated its annual International Week festivities. On Monday, the eventful week began with a Kick-Off ceremony consisting of speeches from the faculty who

led the Summer 2024 Costa Rica, South Dakota, and Bahamas study abroad programs along with some of the students who attended the trips. Tuesday included an International Trivia Competition and a VR Travel Abroad. Wednesday's event was an International Cooking Demonstration by **Ms. Carol Weir** and **Dr. Kim Kelley**, who taught attendees how to make Korean Bibimbap. International Food trucks visited our Bluffton Campus on Thursday to deliver tasty treats to USCB students, staff and faculty. Thank you to everyone who participated in our International Week. Link

Korean Cultural Studies Conference

On October 25, 2024, USCB held its Korean Cultural Studies Conference on the USCB Hilton Head Island campus. A key event in the South Koran and Asian Literacy Education (SKALE) program, led by **Dr. Babet Alvarez**, this conference welcomed guest speakers from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea (Dr. Byeonggu Kang), a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning Photojournalist (Hyungwon Kang), program officer at the U.S Department of Education (Cory Neal), and more. Our SKALE participants also presented their research and findings at the conference. Link

Guest Speaker – Psychology of Religion

Dr. Kyle Messick

Dr. Chris Cotter

Dr. Kyle Messick invited an international guest speaker for his "Psychology of Religion" course. Dr. Chris Cotter, a Sociology and Religious Studies lecturer at The Open University in the UK, discussed with Dr. Messick's students on non-religion. Link

Fall 2024 IPC Meet & Greet

A fun-filled International Meet & Greet, planned by the **International Programs Committee**, occurred in October 2024 to create stronger connection amongst all of our students from all over the globe. The event included delicious Boba for all attendees. Link

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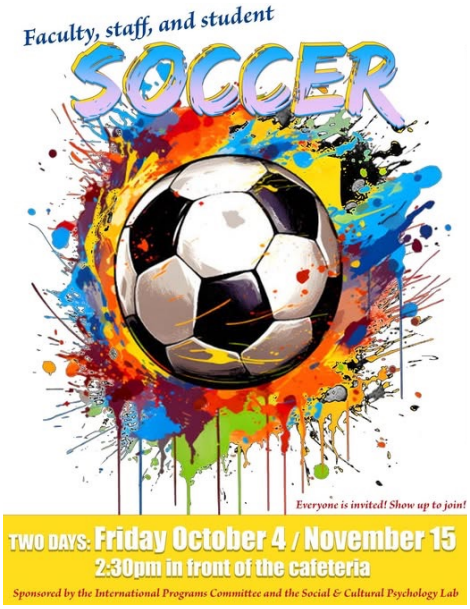
Campus-Wide Soccer Games



Our **International Programs Committee (IPC)** and the **Social & Cultural Psychology Lab** hosted 2 Soccer games for students, staff, and faculty to engage in an internationally loved activity while meeting one another. Link

Study Abroad Presentation – USC Board of Trustees

One of our SKALE student participants, **Celeste Cruz-Reyes *(Elementary Education)***, presented her research on Hangeul, the Korean written alphabet, to the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees in September 2024. Her project was developed from her experience as a SKALE participant, and she was provided an amazing opportunity to further develop her research by engaging in Korean language while abroad for 4 weeks in South Korea. Link

A Sand Shark Adventure in Brazil

Destiny O'Neill *(Biology)* completed a research trip in Campinas, Brazil. Under the guidance of Dr. Gustavo Mercaldi at the Laboratório Nacional de Biociências (LNBio) (Centro Nacional de Pesquisa em Energia e Materiais - CNPEM), Destiny deepened her studies and passion abroad! We are so grateful that she had fun on this month-long research experience. Link

USCB Education Program – Costa Rica Study Abroad

USCB Sand Sharks experienced local life and the K-12 education structure in Costa Rica through a study abroad program led by **Dr. Bruce Marlowe** and **Ms. Kattia Chaves Herrera**. The participants got to co-teach in classrooms and reflect on the similarities and differences between K-12 class and curriculum structure between the U.S and Costa Rica. This transformative experience provided USCB Sand Sharks with strong global knowledge, stronger teaching implemental strategies, and amazing memories. Link

SKALE Participants Experience South Korea

As part of the 18-month South Korean and Asian Literacy Education (SKALE) project, the 13 participants, made up of USCB faculty, USCB students, and local K-12 educators, took the training they had undergone in the U.S and utilized it in South Korea for 4 weeks. On June 23, 2026, the participants stepped foot on South Korean soil and immediately began to immerse themselves in the culture, language, and life in South Korea. From trying new foods, taking South Korean language lessons, visiting South Korean schools, and even visiting the DMZ, USCB's SKALE group gained stronger insight and knowledge for themselves and to provide to their communities and students. Link

Sand Sharks Volunteers – Oglala Lakota Nation

From South Carolina to South Dakota, USCB Sand Sharks volunteered at the Pine Ridge Reservation, where they built and delivered beds for children of the Oglala Lakota Nation. During their experience, ***Nursing*** students **Sierra Brown, Faith Jackson, Mackenzi McBride, Peter Phillips**, and **Makayla Smith** and ***Public Health*** student **Kari Hill** also learned cultural and health topics from the Lakota Nation. Special thanks to **Dr. Hutchinson** and **Professor Berrios** for leading these students. Link

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Biology Study Abroad – San Salvador Bahamas

Led by **Dr. Kim Ritchie** and **Dr. Joe Staton**, and accompanied by **Dr. Caroline Sawyer**, 6 ***Biology*** students (**Campbell Crum, Taylor DeSilva, Piper Davis, Lorean Quintana, Liza Jones, and Rohan Preis**) studied abroad at the Gerace Research Center on San Salvador Island in the Bahamas. In the course titled "The Natural History of the Bahamas", our Sand Sharks learned about the natural, historical, and archeological history of the Bahamas through lectures, excursions, and snorkeling. Link

USCB Students Study Abroad in the Netherlands

USCB's ongoing partnership with HZ University in the Netherlands provided 3 Sand Sharks with a successful semester abroad. ***Public Health*** students **Will Findley** and **Katrina O'Grady** and ***Business Administration*** student **Andrea Boyd** spent the Spring 2024 semester earning college credit abroad while meeting new friends, gaining global perspectives, and having fun. Link

Virtual Study Abroad & Info Session

On April 2, 2024, USCB hosted an AI-Virtual Study Abroad and Study Abroad Info Session event at the Bluffton Campus library to kick-off a Mini International Week. Tables with information on upcoming study abroad opportunities (Biology-Bahamas, Education – Costa Rica, Nursing – Guatemala, Public Health & Biology – Poland, International Studies – South Korea) were displayed to discuss study abroad opportunities with students. VR Headsets by our MakerSpace provided an opportunity for students to take a sneak peek at our study abroad offerings or even travel somewhere else in the world. To spark international discussion even further, a map of the world was open for students to mark where they "have travelled" and where they "want to travel". It was so amazing to see the excitement and joy in international studies and opportunities during this event. In addition to this event, the campus invited International Food trucks onto campus during the week and hosted an International Trivia Competition. Link

USCB Hospitality Management & Study Abroad Ireland

Based out of Monaghan, Ireland, Study Abroad Ireland made a special request for our ***USCB Hospitality, Resort, and Tourism Management*** department. Our Sand Sharks were requested to plan an Irish party on USCB's Hilton Head Island campus for attendees of the Community Colleges for International Development annual conference. Hospitality students and faculty planned an Irish-inspired food and drink menu, decorated the venue, and more. Link

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Fall 2023 International Trivia

Test your knowledge of International Trivia by answering the questions below! *(Answers at the end of the newsletter)*

1. ***True or False:*** **The currency of Canada is the Canadian Dollar.**

2. **Which country has the most active volcanoes?**
   a. Japan
   b. Philippines
   c. Ireland
   d. Indonesia

3. **Which country's flag DOES NOT have a star on it?**
   a. United States of America
   b. China
   c. Australia
   d. Poland

4. **Which country does NOT border Germany?**
   a. France
   b. Poland
   c. Romania
   d. Denmark

5. **The Kiwi Bird is native to _____?**
   a. Taiwan
   b. New Zealand
   c. Egypt
   d. Thailand

Annual International Week – Fall 2023

One of the university's most popular events, International Week, did not settle below expectations this year. With events from November 13-17,2023, the entire USCB community engaged in global conversations, food, games, and activities. Monday began with a Kick-Off with presentations from students who studied abroad in Summer 2023 in Poznan, Poland. Tuesday held a campus-wide Trivia game with over 120 participants. Hosted by **Dr. Sean Barth** and **Dr. Eva Smith** from our Hospitality and Tourism Department, Wednesday's event was an International Cooking Demonstration featuring Baja Shrimp Tacos. On Thursday, we invited International Food Trucks to sell tasty treats to our campus,

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but the delicious food didn't stop there. Aramark also contributed to the international menu. The exciting week closed on Friday with a VR Travel Abroad utilizing the MakerSpace's VR Headsets along with a fun Soccer Game amongst USCB students, staff and faculty. Link

USCB SKALE Participants Selected

Congratulations to the selected participants for USCB's South Korean and Asian Literacy Education (SKALE) project, a Fulbright-Hays and U.S Department of Education funded project to facilitate South Korean and Asian education and understanding amongst the community. After months of receiving and reviewing applications, the following participants were selected for this life-changing opportunity led by **Dr. Babet Alvarez**:

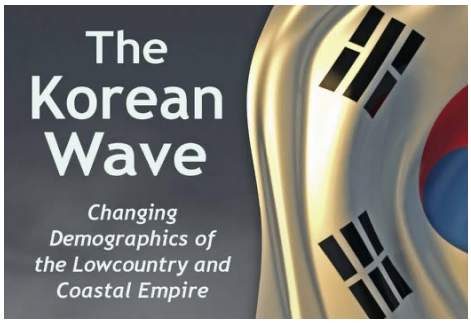
- USCB Faculty
  - **Dr. Cindy Lahar *(Psychology)***
  - **Dr. Kyle Messick *(Psychology)***
  - **Professor Angela Nadeau *(Psychology)***
  - **Dr. Caroline Sawyer *(Communication Studies)***
- Subject-Area Scholar
  - Dr. Greg Choy (University of South California, Berkeley)
- USCB Education Students
  - **Celeste Cruz-Reyes *(Elementary Education)***
  - **Evan Calabrese *(Secondary Education – English Major)***
- K-12 Educators
  - Mary Katherine Schramm (May River High School – Beaufort County)
  - Elizabeth Schlieger (May River High School – Beaufort County)
  - Elizabeth Rodgers Clarke (Richmond Hill High School – Bryan County)
  - Sharon Butler (Richmond Hill High School – Bryan County)
  - Roman Czerwinski-Haro (Richmond Hill High School – Bryan County)
  - Amber Crews (Richmond Hill High School – Bryan County)

The participants engaged in an intense 12-month training on South Korean culture, language and education both in the U.S and abroad in South Korea. The end of the project required all participants to present their findings and experiences at the Korean Cultural Studies Conference (KCSC) in October 2024 on USCB's Hilton Head Island campus. Link

The Community Votes – Global Bandanas

In October 2023, the USCB Community voted on a new marketing idea for USCB International Programs – a USCB Global Bandana. The community excitedly casted their votes for their favorite design, which would be utilized in USCB study abroad and international pictures, conferences, and apparel to represent USCB International programs. The biggest surprise – each design was a winner! Each design was ordered to further promote and advertise USCB's mission of going global. Link

The Korean Wave – OLLI Presentation



USCB's Coordinator for International Programs, **Dr. Babet Alvarez**, hosted an OLLI Presentation titled, "The Korean Wave – Changing Demographics of the Lowcountry and Coastal Empire." In relation to the South Korean and Asian Literacy Education (SKALE) project that Dr. Alvarez led, her presentation on October 20 provided insight to OLLI Members on Korean culture, the influx of Korean culture and businesses in the area, and the importance of understanding other cultures. Over 90 people attended the event and became honorary USCB Korean Culture Ambassadors – pledging to help local communities welcome Koreans moving to our area. Link

Fall 2023 International Meet & Greet

Members of **USCB's International Programs Committee (IPC)** hosted its semesterly International Meet & Greet. Attendees got to meet USCB international students, IPC members, staff & faculty, and more. These sessions provide a stronger sense of community for our students and allow the depth of international studies and relations to grow stronger. Link

Presentations Abroad – Social & Cultural Psychology Laboratory

On behalf of the USCB Social & Cultural Psychology Laboratory, ***Psychology*** student **Graceyn Yonce** presented at the 2023 International Association for the Psychology of Religion Conference. Located in Groningen, Netherlands, Graceyn and Psychology faculty members **Dr. Messick** and **Professor Aranda** strongly represented USCB and experienced an amazing opportunity. Link

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USCB Receives 2023 AASCU Excellence & Innovation Award for International Education

USCB received the honorary award of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Excellence & Innovation Award for the universities tremendous and success strides towards an in-depth international education for students, staff, faculty, and the community. Awarded at the 2023 AASCU's Annual Conference in Chicago, USCB is honored to have received this award and plans to continue its momentum towards immersive global education opportunities. Link

Summer 2023 Poznan University of Medical Sciences Study Abroad

Seven USCB Students experienced an immersive study abroad program at Poznan University of Medical Sciences (PUMS) in Poznan, Poland. **Dr. Joe Staton** and **Mrs. Carol Weir** accompanied 4 ***Biology*** students (**Logan Stewart, Ashley Duggan, Isabel Cannon**, and **Milla Wojciechowski**) and 3 Public Health students (**Tameika Lynard, Darniece Calistro**, and **Kari Hill**) on this amazing opportunity. Our USCB team received hands-on experience in the five-story Medical Simulation Center, explored Poznan, and experienced dorm-life at PUMS. Link

FULBRIGHTHAYS

Fulbright Hays Grant: South Korean and Asian Literacy Education Project

USCB was selected for a competitive Fulbright-Hays Group Project grant ($161,778.27) to prepare the Lowcountry for the influx of Asian culture and businesses in our surrounding area. With the popularity of Korean entertainment, Korean cosmetics, and the development of the Hyundai Motor Group's electric vehicle plant about 37 miles from USCB, the South Korean and Asian Literacy Education (SKALE) project is designed to educate participants and the community on South Korean and Asian culture and language. This U.S Department of Education funded project will immerse 13 participants with in-depth experiential learning, both local and abroad, as participants will be required to spend four weeks in South Korea in Summer 2024 experiencing and increasing their skills. The search for participants occurred in Fall 2023, collecting applications to fill the seats for 4 USCB Faculty members, 2 USCB education undergraduate students, 6 K-12 teachers in the Lowcountry/Coastal Empire area, and a project subject-area scholar. Link

Study Abroad – Greece

Rachelle Martz *(History)* returned home from a semester abroad in Greece. As an international student at the American College of Greece, she studied in Agia Paraskevi (a suburb of Athens). Link

Forever Sand Sharks – HZ Students Return to Netherlands

We are so grateful to call **Lex Theuns, Julia van Gelder**, and **Suzan Cilaci** Sand Sharks and for their safe return back to HZ University of Applied Sciences. These 3 ***Hospitality Management*** students spent their Spring 2023 semester at USCB and had countless amazing experiences. Fins Up Lex, Julia, and Suzan! Link

USCB's First Study Abroad Student in Asia

Chris Lamb *(Interdisciplinary Studies)* is officially USCB's first student to study abroad in Asia! He chose to attend Sogang University in

South Korea, where his experiences included attending language courses only taught in Korean and exploring with his classmates. Link

Ciao Studenti!

Dr. Sean Barth, professor of ***Hospitality, Resort, and Tourism Management***, hosted a cooking class with 27 Italian High School Students from Mater Academy – Doppio Diploma. A fun experience for these students to have while spending 2 weeks at USCB. Link

Sand Sharks Summer Swims

In May 2023, Sand Sharks were asked to share where the Summer Break brought our community, whether that be local, national or international travels. A few of the international adventures that were shared with us were **Toby Brock** ***(Hospitality Management)*** in Montego Bay, Jamaica and **Candice Sutton** and **Gary Sutton** in Phuket, Thailand. Link

ANSWERS TO QUIZES

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1. c. Mumbai, India
2. b. Russia
3. a. Mount Kilimanjaro
4. c. Sudan
5. d. 23

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1. TRUE
2. d. Indonesia
3. d. Poland
4. c. Romania
5. b. New Zealand