



SEEDS OF FRIENDSHIP PLANTED THROUGH IVLP

THE COUNCIL FOR
INTERNATIONAL
VISITORS OF GREATER
NEW ORLEANS

IS NOW

**THE NEW ORLEANS
CITIZEN DIPLOMACY
COUNCIL (NOCDC)**

Upcoming Visitors and Topics of Study

Asian Regional
Group (8)
Community
Approaches to
Social Issues
Dec 4—8

Japan (1)
Crime Prevention
Jan 9—Jan 12

Near East Regional
Group (9)
US Elections
Jan 23—Jan 26

Multi-Regional
Group (16)
Small Business
Jan 24—Jan 30

Regional Group (6)
Student Leaders /
Civic Responsibility
Jan 29—Feb 1

Over the recent Thanksgiving Holidays, staff member Jeanne Foster and husband John traveled to Belgium. Earlier in the year they had been undecided about their vacation destination but had narrowed their list down to a few European countries. In the midst of this indecision, Jeanne had the opportunity to converse with Annick DeRidder, an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) participant visiting New Orleans. Ms. DeRidder, Member of the Flemish Parliament, was so convincing about the charms of her country that the



couple decided it should be Belgium, not Italy, where they would spend their week abroad.

A few months later, Jeanne and John, with their newly-

(l-r) John & Jeanne Foster with Annick DeRidder in Brussels

acquired insider's tips, set off to explore Antwerp and Brussels with Ms. DeRidder's list of things to do and

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GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY EXAMINED BY IVLP GROUP

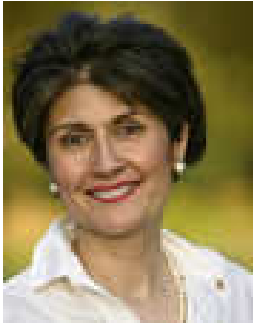


(above) Students at Tulane University pose with IVLP Grassroots Democracy participants. The group was in New Orleans for six days.

In mid-November, a group of 14 IVLP participants arrived in New Orleans to learn more about

Grassroots Democracy. Their program covered crime-fighting, citizen-driven efforts to improve life in New Orleans, citizen-government partnerships, and elections. To address post-Katrina issues, the group first met with the

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(above) Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ms. Goli Ameri

"The most important trip you may take in life is meeting people halfway."
— Henry Boye

New Presidential Appointment

In November, President George W. Bush nominated Ms. Goli Ameri for Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Ms. Ameri's work experience includes founding the telecommunications consulting firm eTinium Inc. As its president, she spoke regularly at industry conferences and authored a column for *Telephony* magazine.

She most recently served

in Geneva, Switzerland as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Prior to that, Ms. Ameri worked for U.S. Senator Gordon Smith (R-Oregon) and in 2004 ran for office herself. Although her bid to represent her district in the U.S. House of Representatives was unsuccessful, her attempt to do so was notable as she first came to the U.S. 30 years prior and received citizenship in 1989.

Ms. Ameri was born in Tehran, Iran. She studied at the Sorbonne in Paris, France and earned a MA in Communications and a BA in Public Relations from Stanford University. At the time of the Iranian Revolution, her parents were living in Paris.

Ms. Ameri is married with two children and brings to the position a dynamic understanding of what it means to be a U.S. citizen. We at the NOCDC welcome her.

Visitor Feedback

"We really want to express our gratitude to the New Orleans Citizen Diplomacy Council for giving us the ability to observe and feel

the situations of pre- and post-Katrina. I also want to salute the might of the people of New Orleans in their unending struggle and their determined spirit to rebuild the city from ashes."
— A. Chakraborti, an IVLP participant from India on a

project exploring television broadcasting.

You can find more visitor feedback on our website under the "Testimonial" tab:

www.nocdc.com

Upcoming International Events

Dec 15 – Deadline. The National Council for International Visitors (NCIV) is sponsoring a photography contest. Pictures should include at least one IVLP participant, either in the U.S. or abroad. Cash prizes will be awarded and winning photographs will be displayed at the 2008 NCIV convention in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit www.nciv.org.

Dec 20 – Public Education Wargame. The public is invited to participate in or to observe a wargame commemorating The Battle of the Bulge which took place on Dec. 20, 1944. Please call Walt Burgoyne at 504-527-6012 ext. 333 for more information. 12:00 pm — 4:00 pm.

Dec 24 – Deadline. The World Affairs Council of New Orleans is reminding its members that to receive the early booking discount for their upcoming April 26th - May 4th trip, members must book spaces by Christmas Eve. The guest lecturer will be Nicholaas Wegter, former political officer for NATO and Head of Representation of the European Commission in The Hague. Call 1-800-942-5004, ext. 217 for details and to make reservations.

Jan 7 – Language classes. The Alliance Française de New Orleans offers language classes for beginners as well as for more advanced speakers. To learn more and to register for their Winter 2008 lessons, call 504-568-0770.

Grassroots Democracy Examined

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Metropolitan Crime Commission, followed by a disaster tour of the city narrated by a FEMA official. The Loyola Law Clinic addressed issues facing citizens, and Belle Reve exposed the group to the challenges of proving care and housing for HIV/AIDS infected individuals.

Their meeting with Blue-Print Louisiana covered how this coalition of business and community leaders attempts to exert influence over local and state politicians. The group heard more about politics during their meeting with the College Republicans at Tulane University where they were invited to question the students about their involvement in local and on-campus politics.

Usually Saturdays are free days for our international visitors, but this group was in town on election day and was able to visit a polling station with Ms. Betsy Williams, Commissioner of Elections. This was followed by time at Jackie Clarkson's Post-Election Party in the ballroom of a French Quarter hotel.

The group was able to experience local culture, in-

cluding attending the first *Merci Boucoup* Community Dinner hosted by the mayor and several community organizations. They also enjoyed an evening jazz performance by Ellis Marsalis.

The St. Bernard Project organized a half-day of labor for the participants

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places to see. Once in Brussels, they had the good fortune to be invited by M. DeRidder to join her for lunch on the roof of the parliament building, an invitation the happy travelers accepted. Afterwards, they observed the parliament in session and received a tour of the building which, Jeanne describes as truly beautiful.

Before saying their good-byes, the three made plans to meet in the future. If you happen to be in New York City this spring, you may just see the Fosters showing their new friend some of their favorite haunts in the Big Apple.

and on the Monday following the elections, the group boarded their bus in work clothes and headed out for a hands-on experience. To give them a better idea of the challenges faced in the area, the participants were encouraged to ask questions of the organization as well as to interact with fellow volunteers.

What this group managed to experience in its short time in town is incredible. Thank you to everyone who played a part in this project.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE NOCDC?

If not, please join us. Membership levels and benefits are at:

www.nocdc.com

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

- Maya Angelou

Thank You to Our Corporate Sponsors

Redmellon
Southern Food Museum

Professional Resources – Thank you to our professional resources and to their colleagues for meeting with our visitors

Belle Reve – **Vicki Weeks**

Blueprint Louisiana – **Wes Gautreaux**

CODOFIL – **David Cheramie, Ph.D.**

FEMA – **Wali Armstead**

John Exnicios, Attorney

Lafayette Consolidated Government –
Phillippe Gustin

Lafayette Convention & Visitors Bureau –
Gerald Breaux

Loyola University Law Clinic – **Bradley Black**

Metropolitan Crime Commission – **Anthony Radosti**

New Orleans City Council – **Jackie Clarkson**

Southern Louisiana Multicultural Alliance – **Ivonne Saloom,**

St. Bernard Project – **Andrea Bean, Janie Strachan, John Strachan, Zack Rosenberg, Liz McCartney**

Tulane University College Republicans –
Laura Scaglione

University of Louisiana at Lafayette – **Barry Ancelet**

Vermilionville – **Michelle Leder**

Home Hospitality – Thank you to everyone who welcomed visitors with home hospitality and sight seeing.

Dr. Ruth Ettinger and **Dr. Ronald Hardey** hosted two visitors from Canada in their Lafayette, Louisiana home for dinner.

November 2007 Figures

Total Visitors – 16

Total Room Nights – 84

Countries Represented

Lebanon, Lesotho, Mexico, Philippines, Spain, Tanzania, Turkey, West Bank

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