



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

## Newsletter

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**MARCH 2025**



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(HE/Him)

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(She/Her)
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- Mariam Abdulsalam
- Sai Prratyush Danthala



**Walk-In Hours: Monday-Thursday 2:00-4:00pm**



**University Plaza, UHB 1006**



**217-206-6678**



**ISS@uis.edu**

If you need to speak directly with an immigration specialist (DSO), you can come during walk-in hours, or email [ISS@uis.edu](mailto:ISS@uis.edu) to book an appointment.



### From the Editor's Desk



Greeting from the ISS office! It is a pleasure to welcome you to this edition of the International Student Services (ISS) monthly newsletter. As you may know, it has been almost a month since I assumed responsibility as the Director of ISS. I have been meeting with various departments on campus to understand how things operate at UIS. I have also scheduled a series of meetings with a small and diverse group of international students to hear their perspectives and see what we can do to support our students better.

My hardworking colleagues at the ISS office and I are working on improving the quality of services that we provide to our students. We want all students to feel at ease in seeking the necessary assistance, especially when it comes to current political climate. You can find vast resources on the ISS's website (<https://www.uis.edu/iss>) that provide much needed guidance, including on how to maintain your F1 status in the United States.

I want to congratulate those who will be graduating in May and planning to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). We recommend applying for OPT as soon as possible. The longer students wait to apply for OPT will result in a longer waiting period to receive OPT approval. If you fear that you will not be able to complete your degree requirements, please reach out to your DSO before May 10th. If you are planning to travel outside the United States during the summer break, please secure travel signature from your DSO. Please use your judgement when making future travel plans.

I wish you all the best as you start the second half of the semester and encourage you to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you!

**Zafrul Amin**  
Director,  
Office of International  
Student Services



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

I am Jonathan Aminiel Nanyaro from The United Republic of Tanzania an East African country located in the African great lakes namely the world's second deepest lake, Lake Tanganyika, Lake Victoria, and Lake Malawi.

Tanzania is home to Africa's highest dormant volcanic mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, and 22 national parks such as the Serengeti, and national conservation areas like the Ngorongoro crater. Being a country with active and dormant volcanic mountains, it has one of the largest rift valleys among African nations resulting in different geological formations.

Tanzania is home to over 120 tribes and 67.5 million people in the tropical region along the Indian Ocean. The capital city of Tanzania is Dodoma and the business capital is Dar es Salaam.

I am taking Computer Science and decided to major in it after taking mechanical engineering classes in Tanzania because this is a combination of an ultimate goal of working within the Automotive industry. I first heard about UIS and the computer science program through a family friend and later in-person while attending Lincoln Land Community College.

Having an entrepreneurial mindset, I am aiming to work within the automotive industry and ultimately produce my own automobiles. My experience in the US has been wonderful, the food has been amazing, I still have not gotten used to the winter but adapted to the seasonal changes compared to Tanzania. I have adopted some American cultural aspects given I have been in the US for 5 years now.

A bit of essential advice to new students is to get a grip on your classes early in the semester and don't put anything off for later. Utilize university resources and student activities that best suit you. Finally, UIS has supportive faculty who can guide you in your interests, no matter what they are.





## UIS Students Embark on Trip to Field Museum



A group of international students from the UIS were taken on a field trip to the famous Field Museum in the city of Chicago. The visit is part of a host of programs and activities designed by the Office of International Students Services (ISS) to assist our students from around the world to explore the United States and enhance their cultural adaptation and learning.

The Field Museum is one of the largest natural history museums in the world with 40 million artifacts and specimens from all corners of the world.





## Athlete of the month

My name is Rick Martijn Brinkhof. I am from Amstelveen, The Netherlands.

I play for the UIS men's soccer team as a defender. Specifically, the middle center-back in a five-defender formation.

I chose soccer because it has always been a big part of my life. My dad, both my uncles, and my grandpa all played at a good competitive level for the same club in the Netherlands. My dad, who was a strong goal scorer, always helped me improve by practicing with me and giving me advice. Growing up in a family so involved in soccer, I started playing at a young age and became a striker. However, moving on, I realized my strengths were more suited to defending and I decided to switch positions. This change made me a stronger player, and I have fully committed to this position ever since.

We finished our fall season in seventh place in the GLVC and got knocked out in the first round of the tournament after losing in extra time to the second-ranked team. We felt we should have finished higher because we played well in many games but didn't always get the results we deserved. Even though the season didn't end as we hoped, we learned a lot as a team.

I've always played soccer at a high level and pushed myself to improve, but I don't plan on going professional. Soccer has given me great experiences and helped me grow as a person. Even though I won't pursue it professionally, I want to keep playing at a strong level. When I go back to the Netherlands, I plan to continue competing at a high level while focusing on my career outside of soccer. I also want to stay connected to the sport in other ways, especially through coaching, while continuing to play for enjoyment.





## WORLD CELEBRATIONS

March 3rd

World Wildlife Day



March 8th

International Women's Day



March 17th

St. Patrick's Day



March 21st

International Day for the  
Elimination of Racial Discrimination



March 27th

World Theatre Day







## Sprintax Webinar Series 2024/2025 Season (EAP)

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### Sprintax Nonresident Tax Webinars (EAP)

In these webinars, international students, scholars and professionals will be run through everything they need to know about nonresident tax for the 2024 tax season. Topics will include who must file, tax residency, FICA, State returns, implications of misfiling as well as how to use Sprintax to prepare a compliant tax return.

- Tuesday, November 26th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Wednesday, December 11th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, January 23rd @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, February 6th @ 11am EST – [Register here](#)
- Wednesday, February 26th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Tuesday, March 11th @ 2pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, March 27th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, April 3rd @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, April 10th @ 2pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Monday, April 14th @ 11am EST – [Register here](#)

### OPT Webinars – Sprintax Nonresident Tax Overview for OPT/CPT (E)

Topics covered will include residency for tax purposes, tax liabilities when on OPT/CPT and pre-employment tax forms when on OPT/CPT. The Sprintax team will also provide an overview of Sprintax Forms which can be used to prepare your pre-OPT/CPT employment tax documents.

- Tuesday, November 19th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Wednesday, December 11th @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Tuesday, January 21st @ 1pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Wednesday, February 26th @ 2pm EST – [Register here](#)
- Thursday, March 27th @ 12pm EST – [Register here](#)

[www.sprintax.com](http://www.sprintax.com)







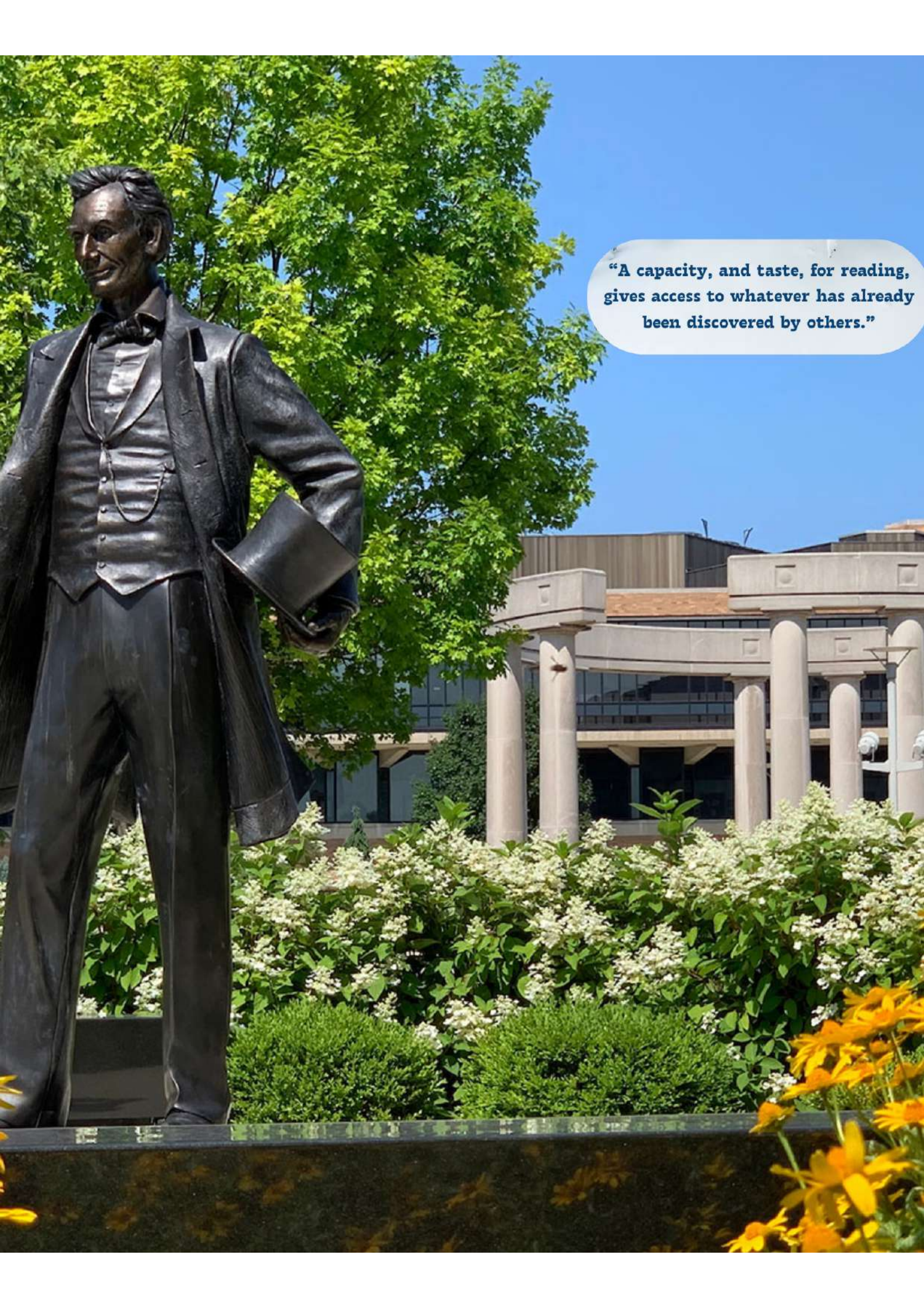
## *MAHJONG MONDAY*

*Every Mondays until the end of Spring  
2025*

*2 pm - 4 pm*

*HCOM lobby*





**"A capacity, and taste, for reading,  
gives access to whatever has already  
been discovered by others."**