Looking Forward to 2015

The India Center is looking forward to an exciting year of visitors in 2015. To start the year, our visitors include Vivek Wadhwa, world renowned technology entrepreneur, who will discuss globalization and innovation, and India studies expert Persis Khambatta who will speak at the Florida International Summit. Please check our website for updates on upcoming visitors and for more information about these events.

- February 10, 2015: Vivek Wadhwa - The Next Wave Globalization: China, India & How the U.S. can Keep Its Competitive Edge in the Midst of Global Innovation - 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. UCF Student Union, Cape Florida Ballroom - Open Forum
- February 26, 2015: Florida International Summit 2015 - Opportunities and Challenges for Human Society and Development - 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. UCF Student Union, Pegasus Ballroom - Advance Registration Required

Inside The India Center’s Fellowship

Interning at The India Center exposed me to the political and social climate of a country I have always been intrigued about. Writing weekly briefs on Indian current events enabled me to make connections between the domestic politics of India and its behavior as an international actor. The research I did combined my interest in gender relations, culture and the entertainment industry. I highly recommend the fellowship at the India Center to anyone who would like to solidify his or her research, writing and analytical skills. The current events of India are stimulating, colorful and informative. India is a key player internationally; keeping up with the subcontinent will expand your insight. - Jessica Rodriguez, Fall 2014 Fellow
Dr. M.C. Santana, College of Arts and Humanities, gave the keynote address at the conference “Media, Youth and Values” Holy Cross College, Tiruchirappalli, (Southeast) India on November 27-28, 2014.

Ceremony and protocol are imperative in India in events such as this one. The formality gave an air of rigorous welcoming to the pedagogical exchange taking place. Higher education is not perceived in the same way it is in the United States but with greater expectations of etiquette. The students, graduate and undergraduate, were very engaged in the discussions, and you could see their faces full of devoted attention. The enthusiasm was obvious, even after the first long day of the conference.

The diverse content of the presentations provided an outlet for three important themes: Media coverage of issues and their influence on young people; young people’s promise of responsibilities; and the ethics of creating mass media messages. As a Ph.D. in International Communication, I wanted to discuss the importance of reading and having visual literacy on messages (commercial, political or news oriented) and how it relates to the individual. Coming from the West and a highly individualistic society, my challenge was to talk with an audience that mostly had a collective perspective. My speech was about “Creating the Whole Individual”, and it proposed the importance of allowing young people to lead and create content that speaks to them while at the same time understanding the great implications of a message seen and heard by millions at a time. With the words “The communication revolution is no longer a revolution; it has, in fact reached a state of maturity.” I began to elaborate on the usual digital and technological changes we encounter globally today and how these changes are now part of our everyday lives and nation/state infrastructures. As UCF’s Women’s Studies director I also addressed a most vital topic for me-gender. Gender analysis constitutes an accepted and growing part of international relations inquiry and a significant international policy tool.

I was reminded of those words throughout the conference when speaker after speaker quoted part of my remarks. I was humbled by this experience. After attending and planning many conferences, I can truly say that this experience was unique. It was different for many reasons. The level of involvement of the student body was especially impressive.

The academic diversity of topics presented by scholars and some graduate students ranged from identity formation in Facebook selfies; to young people’s interpretation of news reports on violence against women in India; to television advertising and learning; smart phone interfaces; to student attitudes on social media, to the pressure to be perfect and the cultivation of body image in television. I was able to connect with scholars and faculty on topics like film, visual communication, policy making as well as administrators of different levels. It was also a great opportunity to share UCF’s story.
In summary, India is magnificent, its natural is overpowering and beautiful. The people live a hard life but full of dignity. Society seems to be centered in the collective mentality where family continues to be the strongest force. I hope you consider visiting India and experiencing all the diversity it has to offer. Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the steering committee -Dr. J. Josephine, Dr. V. Sunderaj and Dr. P. Govindaraju - for its generous support and invitation to visit India and Holy Cross College.

Dr. M. C. Santana, Director of Women’s Studies, College of Arts and Humanities, UCF

To read the extended article and view more of Dr. Santana’s photographs, please visit our website.

An India Center Speaker’s Continued Success

This past September, The India Center welcomed Vivek J. Tiwary, a *New York Times* bestselling author and an award-winning producer of Broadway shows, film, television and graphic novels, to UCF to speak about ethnic barriers in the arts and entertainment. The India Center would like to congratulate Tiwary on his recent accomplishments, including being chosen as a “Special Guest of Honor” at Comic Con India, and honored at The Library of Congress for The National Book Festival 2014, where he and artist Kyle Baker spoke about *The Fifth Beatle*. To round out the momentum of *The Fifth Beatle*, Tiwary presented at TEDxFultonStreet about the graphic novel. We look forward to Tiwary’s continued success in the arts and entertainment fields and thank him for being a friend of The India Center.