



ICIU Diplomat

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2006 Passport to Prosperity a Success!

by *Laura Schraeder*

Colorful flags, fancy native dress and international flavors filled the State of Iowa Historical Building on Saturday, September 30 for "Passport to Prosperity: A Celebration of Iowa's Immigrants and Refugees."

The event annually pays tribute to people born in another country who have made significant contributions to their communities since settling in Iowa. This year's honorees were Wangmeng Lee of Prairie City, a refugee from Laos, Luca Berrone of Waukegan, who is originally from Italy, and Swati Dandekar of Marion, an immigrant from India. ICIU also honored one individual and one organization for their significant contributions to international understanding. Appeals



2006 honorees and ICIU award winners

Court Judge Larry Eisenhower received ICIU's Elinor Robson Award and the Wayne Johnson accepted the ICIU Global Iowa Award on behalf of the Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services.

The entertainment and food for the event reflected the culture of the home countries of the three honorees. Guests enjoyed classical guitar music at the terrace reception while sampling international delights. They then moved down to the atrium, surrounded by flags representing more than 150 nations, to enjoy a buffet style dinner. Guests were serenaded by classical Italian violin music while they savored eggplant curry, chicken laap and lasagna. The Lao Natasinh Dance Troupe of Iowa performed during dinner as a tribute to Mr. Lee.

The honorees told inspirational stories of starting their own business, holding a position in state government and helping others achieve their dreams. Berrone, Dandekar and Lee offered tremendous praise to the people of Iowa for their continued efforts to welcome immigrants and refugees.

ICIU's Upcoming Events

Iowa International Fellows meet:
Jan. 21 and 22 in Des Moines
Feb. 23 and 24 in Cedar Rapids

Iowa Student Global Leadership
Conference: Feb. 2 and 3

Community Connections Program
with Armenian Visitors: Jan. 16
through Feb. 6

More information inside or at
www.iciu.org