

# ICSP

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Stark said students are chosen based on their abilities to present their culture, their English-speaking abilities and their need for financial support.

Haxhiraj has participated in the program since 1999, and she said one of the reasons she applied was for the financial assistance.

"It's a great financial incentive for international students," she said, adding that she thought it would be a way to improve her English abilities and immerse herself in American culture.

"You learn so much more about your own culture because you have to do research and learn more so you can present whatever the audience is asking for," she said.

Haxhiraj said one of the challenges she faces is learning how to balance a full load of classes with the 80 hours a year of community service.

"It can be very demanding," she said.

As part of the celebration, program members also had cultural presentations in the EMU for local school children on Monday and Wednesday. There will also be presentations today from 10 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and 11 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

"I think that it's a wonderful opportunity for the kids," O'Hara Catholic School teacher Kathy Stahmer said. Her fifth-grade class was at the EMU on Wednesday to learn about Vietnamese culture.

Eleven-year-old Lexie said she was excited to learn about "Vietnamese stuff."

"I like to learn about new stuff," she said. "It's fun."

The children learned about aspects of different cultures such as games and stories.

"People just get so interested with things they've never seen," graduate student Veronica Sanchez said.

Sanchez, who just started on the ICSP program this fall, said the program allows students to "just share the way you feel, or dress — your culture."

Haxhiraj said she has fun every time she presents her culture to the community, and her favorite part is when kids give her hugs after the presentations or write her notes about what they've learned.

"I take it to heart, you know, because I want to be a teacher, and I love kids," she said.

Contact the higher education/student life/student affairs reporter at [chelseaduncan@dailyemerald.com](mailto:chelseaduncan@dailyemerald.com).

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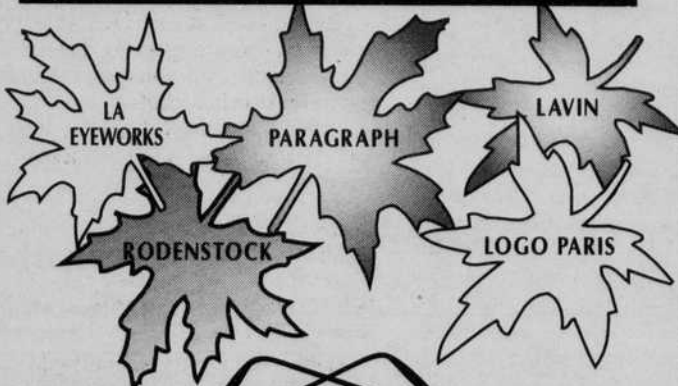
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