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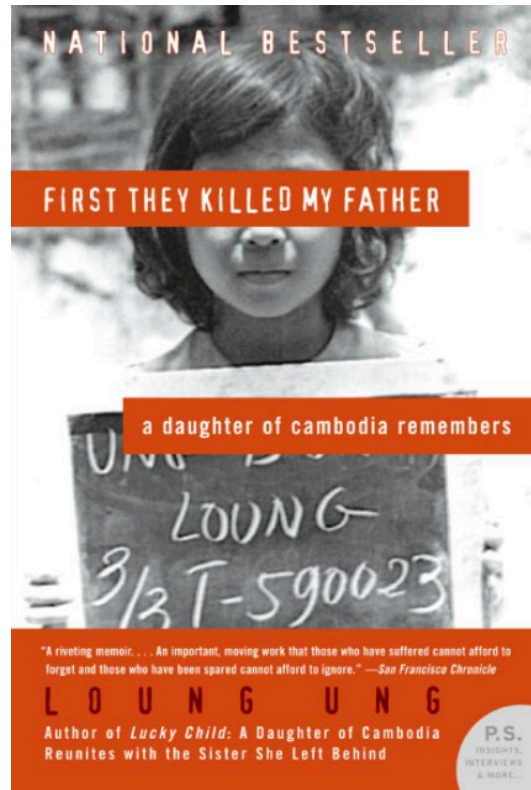


SCII Agenda Newsletter

November 2025 Issue

The mission of the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII) is to coordinate cross-cultural learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and the community.

Author: Loung Ung
First They Killed My Father



Please join us on **Tuesday, November 11th from 10:00-10:50am in Kehrl Auditorium** for a talk and a Q&A with author and activist Ms. Loung Ung. Following the talk she will be available to sign books brought to the event by participants. *All students, staff, faculty, and community members are invited to attend, and the event is free to all.*

Ms. Loung Ung is a bestselling author, peace activist, and entrepreneur. Her memoir *First They Killed My Father* was adapted into an award-winning Netflix Original film directed by Angelina Jolie. Loung was five when the Khmer Rouge stormed Phnom Penh. Over the next four years she lost her parents and two siblings, was separated from her family, and trained as a child soldier. In 1980, at age ten, she and her brother escaped to a refugee camp in Thailand before resettling in Vermont. From 1997 to 2005, Loung served as spokesperson for the Campaign for a Landmine Free World, part of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines. She has since returned to Cambodia more than fifty times, working with survivors, landmine victims, and communities rebuilding from war. Her voice has reached audiences worldwide. Her story has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, CNN, NBC, and ABC News, and she has been the subject of three international documentaries.

A huge thank you to the *Schoolcraft Foundation* and the *Center for Experiential Learning* for sponsoring this event coordinated by the Schoolcraft International

Institute, Pageturners, and Student Activities. Any questions can be directed to Schoolcraft Psychology Professor [Colleen Pilgrim](#).

Student Global Spotlight

Pili Estevez



Hi! I'm Pili, an international student from Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the Editor-In-Chief of *The Schoolcraft Connection*. I'm currently working toward my associate degree in graphic arts and plan to transfer to Wayne State University next year to earn my bachelor's degree in the same field.

I first came to the United States in 2021 through an exchange program, and after two years, I decided to change my visa to become a full-time student. That's when I found Schoolcraft College. I started by taking ESL classes here, and I immediately noticed how welcoming and supportive everyone was from professors to classmates. The environment made me feel comfortable and

motivated to keep learning.

Schoolcraft College was the first place that truly made me feel at home after moving to the U.S. I love the sense of community here and how everyone is always willing to help, no matter your background. The opportunities for growth, both personally and academically, have been incredible. So when it came time to choose a college, Schoolcraft was my first choice and it's one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Over time, I've become more involved on campus as a Student Ambassador, and I help organize events like the Cultural Coffee Connection, a space where students share their cultures and stories. It's one of my favorite parts of being at Schoolcraft because it reminds me how diverse and connected our community is.

In my free time, I enjoy spending time with friends, exploring new places, and working on creative projects. I also love relaxing at home with my cats.

Choosing Schoolcraft was one of the best decisions I've ever made, and I'm grateful for all the opportunities and friendships it has brought into my life.

Focus Series

Imagined Realities, Blurred
Boundaries, and Writing
Greece

Natalie Bakopoulos



On Monday, October 20th, Professor Natalie Bakopoulos joined Schoolcraft College to deliver an interesting Focus Series presentation on her recent novel, [Archipelago](#). During her talk, Professor Bakopoulos described the way in which Greece, her father's homeland, provides a backdrop for all of her literary works, both literally and metaphorically.

Specifically, Bakopoulos highlighted the challenges of writing about a place you love when living mostly outside of its borders, and that place has been subject to oversimplified discourse. In addition, Bakopoulos also discussed the tourism crisis Greece is undergoing and its impact not only from an ecological lens, but from the impact this has had on sustainable housing for its residents. Along with a few members of the community, Dr. Mark Huston and Dr. Brett Griffiths joined the conversation with their classes where students asked engaging questions not only about Greece, but about the creative writing process.

Navratri Garba Event



Schoolcraft College Asian Student Association celebrated Navratri Garba on Saturday, October 4th with close to 700 guests including Schoolcraft families and community members.

Navratri is a Hindu festival that takes place over nine nights. The word “Navratri” is a conjunction of the two words “nava” (meaning “nine”) and “ratri” (meaning “night”). This festival is devoted to the Mother Goddess known variously as Durga, Kali, Bhavani, Amba, and Chandika.

Garba is one of the dance forms. Dandiya Raas, from the state of Gujarat, is a popular dance form as well.

Navratri customs include:

- During the nine days of Navratri, feasting and fasting take precedence over all normal daily activities among Hindu people.
- Evenings give rise to the religious dances in order to worship Goddess Durga Maa.
- Mother Goddess is seen as personification of strength, courage, knowledge, wealth, art, fertility and love.

- Water, mango leaves, rice, coconut, betel leaves, haldi, kumkum and ritual fire (aarti) all help celebrate the supreme mother and her divinity.

All proceeds of the Navatri Garba event benefit the Schoolcraft Student Food Pantry, a program that provides non-perishable food items to students and their families who are impacted by financial hardship. If you wish to learn more about the event or the Asian Student Association, please reach out to their faculty advisor English Professor [Anna Maheshwari](#).

Velibor Bozovic *Elsewhere, on Record*



On Sunday, November 3rd, Professor [Helen Ditouras](#) visited the [Art Windsor-Essex](#) (formerly the Art Gallery of Windsor) to view a fascinating exhibit by Bosnian-born, Montreal-based artist, Velibor Bozovic. To her unexpected delight, Bozovic was in the gallery and personally shared his work, his experiences during the Bosnian genocide, and his life as an artist upon emigrating to Canada after the war. His exhibit, [“Elsewhere, on Record”](#) features a series of different works including photography, radio, and a video installation that highlight “life stories, remembered, distorted, and pieced

together from available fragments” during his years in Sarajevo.

Reflecting on his experience of conflict and migration—Božović recounted the ways in which dislocation and loss are woven into the fabric of his art. After viewing his video “My Prisoner, On Record,” Ditouras and her friends sat with Bozovic who shared the context for this moving piece. The video captured his reunion with his father three years into the siege of Sarajevo and chronicled the tense but silent drive to the space where his father was jailed as a prisoner of war. The video poignantly highlighted not only the trauma he and his family experienced for three years not knowing the fate of his father during the war, but more importantly, the bonds of familial love during times of crisis.

The exhibition is ongoing until February 15th, 2026, and the gallery can be located at 401 Riverside Drive, Windsor, Ontario.

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