

Bandana Chatterjee



By Gina Hills

Like many college students, Bandana Chatterjee is looking forward to summer break when she can go home and visit her family.

But for this 23-year-old graduate student, it may be a little more exciting than for most.

She hasn't seen her family since August 1973 when she left her home in India and arrived at UNL to work on her doctorate degree in chemistry.

Occasionally, she calls her family in Calcutta, West Bengal, but at \$4 a minute, it's kind of expensive.

Instead, she writes and receives two letters a week.

Even though it takes six to 10 days for one of her letters to reach India, spending between 18 and 26 cents is more practical, she said.

Chemistry assistantship

Chatterjee said she always wanted a doctorate degree, but really never thought she'd get it in the United States.

She applied to UNL because she thought it would be a good experience to move away from home and meet new people.

"We hear mainly of the coastal U.S. and I thought real America was in the midwest," she added.

She made her final decision to attend UNL when she discovered she could get a research assistantship.

Chatterjee receives no money from her parents, and the \$322 a month, less taxes, is her only financial support, she said.

No dollar problems

"But I have no problems financially," she said. "I don't think it's that difficult to live on \$322 a month in Lincoln," she added.

This semester she lives in an R St. apartment with another Indian graduate student. The semester before, she lived alone.

When she first came to Lincoln, she lived in International House. There she saw her first snowfall and learned to speak and understand "the American dialect," she said.

Although she knew British English before she came, she said American pronunciation is difficult to understand. But, within a month she said she could speak and understand it easily.

Her roommate this year is from a different part of India and

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Alvaro Corzo and daughter Gloria



By Mary Kay Roth

When Alvaro Carvajal-Corzo came to Nebraska from Bogota, Colombia, two years ago, he didn't come alone—with him were his three children and an expectant wife.

Now his family of six is squeezed into a small apartment. Gloria, his wife who speaks no English, and four children, Maria 7; Gloria, 6; Juan, 4; and Alvaro, 2, all wait the time they can return to Columbia.

Carvajal arrived at UNL in August, 1973, to learn about agricultural economics. His

expenses are paid by the Central Bank in Colombia, where he worked before coming to Nebraska. The bank pays tuition, transportation, housing, insurance, plus monthly payments for additional costs.

"It's not that we don't like it here," Carvajal said, "it's just that it was better in Colombia."

Hostility experienced

Carvajal said he was used to "complete, strong relationships, not only with family, but also with friends." But it seems different to him in America.

"Many people just don't like foreigners, and it's not difficult to tell," Carvajal said "You just get a feeling from them, and you know it means stay away."

Six months ago Carvajal said he and his family were asked to move from their first apartment by the landlord, because they "made too much noise."

After Carvajal moved, the landlord refused to return the \$50 deposit.

"I don't like to fight," Carvajal said, "and so I just let it go. If he wanted us to move, for one reason or another, we'd move."

Small apartment now

"Besides, I'm not going to ask my children to stop laughing and playing like every child should be able to," he explained. In Colombia, the Carvajals own a large home with a huge back yard.

So they now live in a smaller apartment, with the four children dashing around the living room chattering half in English and half in Spanish.

The two oldest girls attend public grade school, and one boy

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Two student's profiles

I-House traverses international boundaries

By Deb Gray

Azin Khan, a Pakistani, lives next to Hamid Kahn, an Indian. They are from adjoining countries experiencing a schism of political ideas.

But for these men, and 68 others living in Neihardt Residential Center, political differences do not affect individual relationships in most cases.

As Adib Butt, another Pakistani student, said, "I don't think this is the right place for that. We came here to learn about other cultures. We leave our differences back home."

This concept in dormitory living is International House, where each foreign student rooms with an American one. Forged from the hope that individuals supersede politics, I-House aims to widen a student's perspective on the world.

Thirty-four foreign students now live in I-House, six per cent of the 585 foreign students now attending UNL. The 75-space living unit is almost filled to capacity with five vacancies still open for second semester.

Expecting rejuvenation

Since I-House opened four years ago, there has been a growing trend in America toward isolationism, according to Time magazine. How has this trend affected the I-House spirit? Does I-House fulfill a need for the foreign student?

Jay Hall, a graduate student working toward a degree in social psychology, lived in I-House when it opened in Sept. 1971. This fall, he became director. He doesn't know where I-House is headed, he said, but the time has come for rejuvenation.



"We're moving towards new activities — the kind that reach out to the community," he said. "We are not just a group of 70 people living in the dorm. We want to relate to anyone who wants to relive an experience from a country they're interested in or have visited."

While I-House is still active—sponsoring ethnic dinners and forums—Hall said its spirit has changed.

Excitement lacking

"In the beginning, the people who had worked to get the thing approved were still here. Everything was new. Everyone felt a part of creating something," Hall said.

"To many people now, I-House is a nice place to live and they think it's great to have activities. But they don't have the excitement that comes from being a part of making something happen."

Hall compared I-House with a family, because although the residents usually get along well, "Sometimes you hate your brothers and sisters."

"It's a model Peyton Place. The rumors travel like wildfire. It's unbelievable. And often the person who's the most directly affected is the last to hear. You really have to watch it. I think we sometimes kill ourselves to be sensitive to each other."

In the future, Hall said he hopes he and his staff will "try to come up with ideas to revive the old spirit."

"I think a lot of the things that we used to do: fell by the wayside. But sometimes things from the past are really great."

Zeman starts I-House

The past for I-House began five years ago, largely

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