**WE LEARN OF IPS**
(Program Skit)

**CAST:** Three chapter members take the three parts in the skit with an introduction by the program chairman.

**Mary Thomas** – Chapter IPS Chair
**Beatrice Mouser** – Student from Sierra Leone, Africa
**Sonal Rao** – Student from Malaysia

**SETTING:** Three persons sitting at a card table. The program chair stands to the side as she introduces the program.

**PROGRAM CHAIR**: Today we have a wonderful treat. Our IPS chair, Mary Thomas, has brought two students who are receiving International Peace Scholarships to present our program. May I introduce Sonal Rao from Selangor, Malaysia, and Beatrice Mouser from Sierra Leone, Africa.

**MARY:** I am so happy that you, Beatrice and Sonal could be with us today. Many of our members have questions about the program, which I hope we will be able to answer in discussion today. Most of us know that these scholarships are made possible entirely through voluntary gifts of our members and chapters. The fund is administered by a board of trustees consisting of three members, appointed by the Executive Board of International chapter. Each member serves for a six-year period. Only graduate foreign students from all countries are eligible. The exception to this is for foreign students who attend Cottey College.

**SONAL**: My father works at the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lampur, Malaysia. It was through his contacts there that I learned of these scholarships. I wrote to the P.E.O. headquarters at 3700 Grand Avenue in Des Moines, Iowa, asking for information. I received a letter promptly giving me some facts about the scholarship and asking for information to determine my eligibility, which would provide a basis for sending me application forms. I returned a letter, which included my age, citizenship, the degrees I held and the field of study for which the scholarship was requested.

**MARY:** Beatrice, did you go through this same procedure?

**BEATRICE:** Mine was somewhat different, for I was already attending a university here as a full time student when I applied. I came to this country under the auspices of the Institute of International Education with a travel grant from the U.S. government. Funds were available for me for only one year and I needed only one more year to complete my Masters degree in Nutrition. My school offered to waive my tuition, but I had to find some way to provide for my room and board. The dean of women told me about this P.E.O. Scholarship, and I applied that very day.

**MARY:** I understand that many foreign students find out about the scholarships from the deans and professors. Others hear about it in books listing grants, through students who have returned to their countries, and even through P.E.O.s who are traveling about.

**SONAL**: In my application, I made out a budget showing my anticipated expenses for the year. The university sent me this information. I also gave my estimated income for the year, which included a tuition grant from the university and $500 from my family.

**MARY**: With this information from each applicant, I can see how the board of trustees can determine the amount of the scholarship. Though the maximum amount is $12,500, not all applicants need that much.

**BEATRICE**: I was born in Bonthe Sherbro, Sierra Leone, in Africa. I am 24 years old and the second daughter in a family of eight. My father is a clerk in the Native Administration. I started my education in the Minnie Mull Memorial Girls School. Upon completion of high school with honors, I was fortunate enough to receive a government scholarship at Njola University where I received my bachelor’s degree in Home Economics. I started to teach cooking and sewing in a high school. Due to the shortage of teachers, I was also assigned to teach literature and help with extra-curricular activities such as youth fellowship, literary and debating societies, and even teaching Sunday school classes. I loved teaching but felt I needed more background, which I could best obtain in the United States.

**MARY**: You are doing well in your studies as I have learned from one of your professors that you are in the top 10% of students, a truly dedicated individual who will be a great asset in your country

Sonal, this is your first year in our country. I understand that you wrote the board of trustees when you were notified of your scholarship saying, I am indeed greatly moved, overjoyed, and grateful to be awarded this scholarship. Now that you are here, what are your thoughts?

**SONAL**: My greatest dream since childhood has been to attend a university in the United States or Canada. I am the oldest of four children in an Indian family. My father has been attached to the U.S. Embassy as librarian for the past 19 years. While in college, I took a keen interest in athletics, but also did volunteer work in a slum area and orphanage. When I completed high school, I started to work with the U.S. Army Research Unit based in Malaysia, always hoping that some day there would be money to study in America. I was so excited when I heard I had been granted a scholarship, but leaving my family, friends, and activities behind was really sad.

I was pretty lonely when I first arrived. The university seemed large without one familiar face, though everyone was kind to me. Even the food tasted strange. But the most wonderful thing happened to me the very first week. Mrs. Roberts, a P.E.O., telephones and asked me to come to her home and have dinner with her family. By the end of that evening, I knew I would never feel alone again. I had friends. Why, Mrs. Roberts talked to me like my mother does. She told me so many things about American ways, which helped me so much, and now I am beginning to like your food.

**BEATRICE:** I have several P.E.O. friends now, too. Last month, I had a birthday and Mrs. Ritter invited me for dinner. There was even a birthday cake with my name and candles on it. Cards and little friendly notes came from P.E.O. ladies for days. I’ve never known such a birthday. I certainly didn’t know before that I had so many people interested in me.

I appreciate the cards and notes from P.E.O.s. They are so warm and friendly. When I return to my country next year, I will have additional knowledge, which is sorely needed by my people; but I will also carry with me a message of goodwill and understanding, which your organization symbolizes to me.

**SONAL:** I agree with you, Beatrice, for I love ‘the P.E.O. ladies’. When that letter came saying that I would have the IPS scholarship for this year, I wrote to the Board of Trustees and said that, “I can only pray that I can live up to your hopes by working hard during the years ahead.” I will need to re-apply for the renewal of my scholarship to complete my work. When I return to my country, I will do my best to share my knowledge, but I will tell them too of your friendship and understanding.

**MARY:** We P.E.O.s are proud of you and proud to have a part in making your educational goals become a reality. Thank you again for coming.

Source: Utah State Chapter,

Revised: Laura Cox, Georgia State Chapter 2023