



# Connect

March/Mars 2020

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Connect newsletter welcomes your submissions!

Send your news, ideas, photos, and articles to:

[info@inlus.org](mailto:info@inlus.org)

Connect newsletter is published quarterly.

## INLUS Reflecting on Year #1, Starting a New Decade

As 2020 unfolds, we're hopeful about the future but pause to look back at our first (partial) year. After many months of work getting legal and operational pieces in place, INLUS had its launch on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Over the last six months, there have been many moments that we are particularly proud of and there are so many people we need to thank for help making them happen. You can read the 2019 Annual Report posted at [www.inlus.org/reports](http://www.inlus.org/reports), but here are a few highlights:

First, we celebrate the 148 individuals and families, 11 businesses and 10 Icelandic clubs or organizations who signed on as initial Founding Members. We thank them for their pioneer-like vision and support through their memberships and donations.

Second, we're proud of the programming we've provided so far. Two educational webinars, one Authors Corner event and a six-week Icelandic language course went live last November and December. You can read more about the Icelandic language class in this newsletter and view replays of the other past events on our website at [www.inlus.org/inlus-events](http://www.inlus.org/inlus-events).

Third, we're committed to passing forward as much funding as possible toward scholarships and grants. In 2019, a \$1000 scholarship was awarded to an American woman learning Icelandic as a second language at the University of Iceland and a \$500 grant was provided to the 2020 Nordic Lights Film Festival in Seattle. We launched a new local-level grants initiative called ILLUGI, and intend to award Snorri Program and Icelandic Language Camp Scholarships.

Finally, we honor and thank those who have joined our volunteer team. Great people are working hard daily to build quality programming and events, publications like this newsletter, and informative website pages and social media posts. We welcome new volunteers to join this team in our mission. If you're interested in volunteering your talents to INLUS or if you have any feedback, we'd love to hear from you at [info@inlus.org](mailto:info@inlus.org).

## INLUS YouTube Channel

Be informed when a new INLUS video is posted! Subscribe to the INLUS YouTube Channel at

[https://  
www.youtube.com/  
channel/  
UCbpAv-  
VA8GDDqdu7hcjMK5Gw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbpAv-VA8GDDqdu7hcjMK5Gw)

If you would like to watch recordings of previous events, you can find links to them on the INLUS website and YouTube.

**Iceland Writers Retreat:**

[https://youtu.be/  
PeCuOL\\_nooc](https://youtu.be/PeCuOL_nooc)

**Svavar Knútur:**

[https://youtu.be/  
xXNp\\_EtLJU4](https://youtu.be/xXNp_EtLJU4)

**Icelandic Yule Lads:**

[https://youtu.be/  
vhD3lnMHk4](https://youtu.be/vhD3lnMHk4)

## Message from the President Let it Grow!

As you can tell from the first article, 2019 was a hectic time for the INLUS. A huge thank you to the Volunteers and Founding Members who helped us out of the starting gate. The work actually began last January (and before). Sunna Furstenuau brought the Board together, made sure the incorporation papers were filed, our 501(c)(3) application was approved, led us into the launch in June, and ensured that programs and classes were offered. As you can imagine, this took a huge amount of time and energy, and it took a toll. This January, she requested to step into the Past President role and the Board agreed to that. Sunna will now lead our Social Media and Outreach efforts.

Sunna's move began a ripple effect and other changes have occurred with the INLUS Board. I have moved into the role of President and Doug Hanson has retained his role as Treasurer and added Vice President. David Johnson will remain as Secretary. We have also expanded the Board and welcome Julie Hall-den Boer as a Director-at-Large. I encourage you to visit the INLUS website for our operational responsibilities. The INLUS 2019 Annual Report is on the website as well.

INLUS is now turning a page – it is established, and it is time to grow. We have members in 36 states – let's get to all 50! Let's grow the number of applications for our scholarships and grants! The INLUS will continue to offer programs of value at the national level, and we also want to expand programming at the local level. Of course, we are always looking for volunteers who want who want to showcase their talents, whether it is once a week or for a special project once a year.

Everyone can play a role in helping the INLUS grow! Please feel free to drop me a line at [Dianne@INLUS.org](mailto:Dianne@INLUS.org) or give me a call at (952) 857-9128 with your thoughts and ideas. 2020 will be a great year for INLUS because of you! Thank you.

*Dianne O'Konski*  
President, INLUS

## April 2020 INLNA Convention

The Icelandic community is gathering in Gimli, MB April 23–25, 2020 for the 101st Icelandic National League of North America Convention. Registration is open at [www.inlofna.org/convention-2020](http://www.inlofna.org/convention-2020). Early registration closes February 29. The program is nearly finalized and will be posted on the website soon. There are still a few vendor spots available – information is also available on the convention website.

# Inaugural INLUS Icelandic Language Classes a Success

Eighteen INLUS members participated in a 6-week online Icelandic language course. In post-class evaluations, students raved about our instructors. Ella is a high school teacher of special needs students who teaches Icelandic to immigrants in Iceland. Dagrún is a university student who also works as teacher's assistant in Iceland. Besides vocabulary building and practice conversations, each hour-long lesson featured a wonderful Icelandic culture segment including folk songs and stories. One week they took the class down the hall with their cameras where a local Icelandic community choir sang a special Icelandic holiday hymn just for us. What a moving moment!



Our two fabulous instructors –  
Elín ("Ella") Guðmundardóttir and  
Dagrún Jónsdóttir

## INLUS Scholarship Winner

Erin Johnson was a Special Education teacher in the Minneapolis, MN school system when she joined the Icelandic Hekla Club. Possibilities to expand on her Icelandic heritage arose when she participated in



Erin Johnson

the Snorri Program in 2013. Since that time, she has gone back to Iceland to visit her friends and relatives every year. Now, she is studying Icelandic as a Second Language at Haskóli Íslands and is the first person to receive an INLUS Scholarship to study Icelandic. "The scholarship was instrumental in helping me get on my feet here as I started my studies in Iceland. I am so grateful for the support of the INLUS, as it meant I didn't need to scramble to find a job right away. I was able to ease into the semester and later found a job that was perfectly suited to my education and experience. I attend classes in the morning, which include Icelandic Language (reading/writing), Conversational

Practice, and Icelandic Grammar. In the afternoons I work part time at an after school program assisting kids with special needs. I love that I have been able to merge my two passions, Iceland and teaching, into one. This is exactly the journey I was hoping to go on when I made the decision to move to Iceland, and I wouldn't have been able to do it without the support of the INLUS. Þakka ykkur kærlega fyrir!"

## "20 Years of Snorri" Magazine Celebrates Snorri Programs

To celebrate 20 years of life-changing experiences, the Snorri Program has published a magazine chock full of stories about participants of all Snorri Programs. To check it out, use this link:

[https://issuu.com/snorriprogram/docs/20\\_years\\_of\\_snorri\\_final\\_144dpi?fbclid=IwAR00eAkRrXJvsH6yEH2\\_h4AVLjTt-qHfPhFCNT\\_ri539opUyRH RVhqumMSA](https://issuu.com/snorriprogram/docs/20_years_of_snorri_final_144dpi?fbclid=IwAR00eAkRrXJvsH6yEH2_h4AVLjTt-qHfPhFCNT_ri539opUyRH RVhqumMSA)

To learn more about the Snorri Programs, go to:

<http://www.snorri.is/>

# INLUS Sponsors Nordic Lights Film Festival



Three Icelandic films will be screened at the 2020 Nordic Lights Film Festival, including:

## *The County / Héraðið* by Grímur Hákonarson

Opening night film! Set in a small Icelandic farming community, *The County* tells the story of Inga, a middle-aged dairy farmer who rebels against the all-powerful local Cooperative. Inga tries to get other farmers to join her in rising up against the Co-op's corruption, but encounters great resistance, forcing her to confront the community's dependence and loyalty to this single, dominant enterprise. Inga must use her resourcefulness and cunning to break free of the Co-op's grasp and finally live life on her own terms.

## *The Seer and the Unseen* by Sara Dosa

The volcanic rock that covers most of Iceland is not just beautiful and protected in the Nature Conservation register, it is also purportedly the home to elves, trolls, and other hidden people. When a new road is set to be built through a lava field, environmentalists including Ragnihildur "Ragga" Jónsdóttir – a "seer" who can communicate with elves – must fight to preserve the sacred rock while combating Iceland's push to grow economically in this magically real fable by Sara Dosa.

## *Agnes Joy* by Silja Hauksdóttir

Rannveig is experiencing burnout in all aspects of her mundane suburban life. She's stuck with a job she hates and a marriage that is slowly dying. On top of that, she's constantly fighting with her rebellious daughter, Agnes, and can't face the possibility of Agnes growing up and leaving her behind. When a new neighbor, Hreinn, shows up at their doorstep, Rannveig and family face new challenges that are beyond their control.

To find out more about the festival or purchase tickets, see

<https://www.nordicmuseum.org/nlff>

[www.INLUS.org](http://www.INLUS.org)

[info@inlus.org](mailto:info@inlus.org)

2843 27th St S

Fargo ND 58103

