

The June 2005 issue of the Finnish edition of *Reader's Digest* (*Valitut Palat*, which issues some 1,000,000 copies) features an article on expatriate Finns. These are people who have pursued successful careers abroad, but have remained unknown to the general public in their native Finland. The article focuses on five people, including a Japanese senator, a basketball player in Italy, a business guru in Switzerland and a Hollywood stylist, as well as on ICIC's own director, Professor Ulla Connor. Translated, below is what the article says about her:

"I am just a poor country girl from the village of Kattilainen in the Kymi-valley," says Professor Ulla Connor, who now lives in Indianapolis in the United States. She is one of the most celebrated Finns to achieve a renowned career at a university overseas.

Since 1997 she has been the director of the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication, which focuses on research in applied linguistics and helps international Indiana residents with their English. There are about 200,000 people in Indiana who were born outside the United States.

Ulla Connor is a professor at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). "She is not only a research linguist, but also an educator," says Kari Sajavaara, Professor Emeritus of applied linguistics at the University of Jyväskylä in Finland. "As the world becomes increasingly international, linguistic problems in the workplace become more common. Ulla Connor has done pioneering work to solve such problems."

Connor has lived in the United States since 1971 and she has Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Helsinki, Master of Arts degrees from the universities of Helsinki, Florida and Wisconsin. In 1978 she earned her PhD from the University of Wisconsin.

In her work she has had the opportunity to compare Finnish and American students. "You learn everyday speech by speaking it," Connor says. "Finnish students are too shy, they should engage in conversation more boldly."

Ulla Connor lives with her husband, who is also a professor, in their own house. In their leisure time the couple enjoys theatre and symphony concerts. "I also love Finnish tango" Connor, whose maiden name is Ulla Maija Niemela, reveals. There are always Finnish rye bread and lingonberries in Connor's freezer. Her home is also filled with ceramics and glass from the Finnish design companies of Arabia and Iittala. "I buy lovely blazers designed by the Finnish designer Annikki Karvinen, even though they are terribly expensive," she says.

Connor hopes that ICIC will be a role model for other similar language institutions around the globe. "Our goal is to build linguistic bridges between people from different cultures," she says. Connor hopes to one day receive an invitation from the Finnish president to the Finnish Independence Day Ball at the president's palace. "It would be a big thing for the people of the village of Kattilainen" she remarks.