

# Features

## Internationals find 'home' at IFM

By JULIE PISCARIK  
Staff writer

Without the incentive and determination of Raj Aluri, international students at USC literally might not be where they are today.

Aluri founded the Columbia chapter of International Friendship Ministries in 1982.

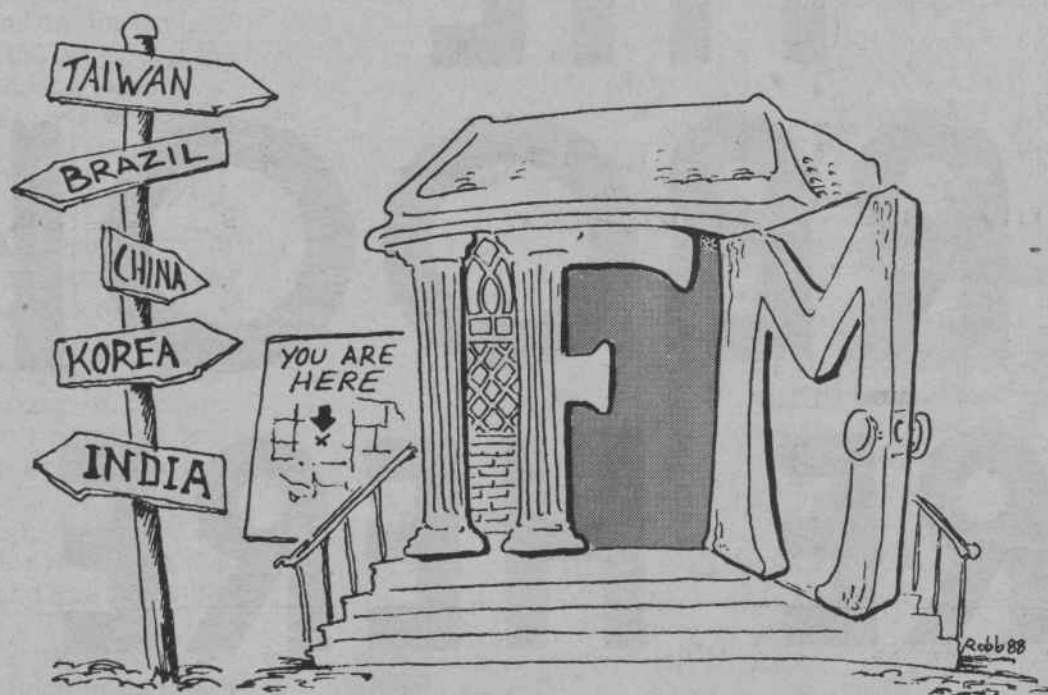
A native of India, Aluri arrived in South Carolina in 1976 to study international relations at Carolina. Feeling, he said, like a "lost lamb" in a new surrounding, he decided to establish an organization offering spiritual fellowship to foreign students and internationals residing in Columbia.

More than 1,000 international students study at USC, representing 90 countries throughout the world. IFM gives them an opportunity to interact with fellow internationals and native Columbians as well. Regardless of a student's religious beliefs, Aluri said, all interested are welcome to join.

About 200 USC students take advantage of IFM services, which range from Friday night friendship dinners to trips to Orlando, Fla., during Christmas break. IFM also provides cultural discussions, Bible studies, an English communication skills program, an American host family program and housing facilities for internationals.

The program has grown over the past few years. As the foreign population of Columbia increases, the services offered by IFM have expanded. Aluri plans to organize chapters in the Clemson, Charleston and Charlotte, N.C. vicinities.

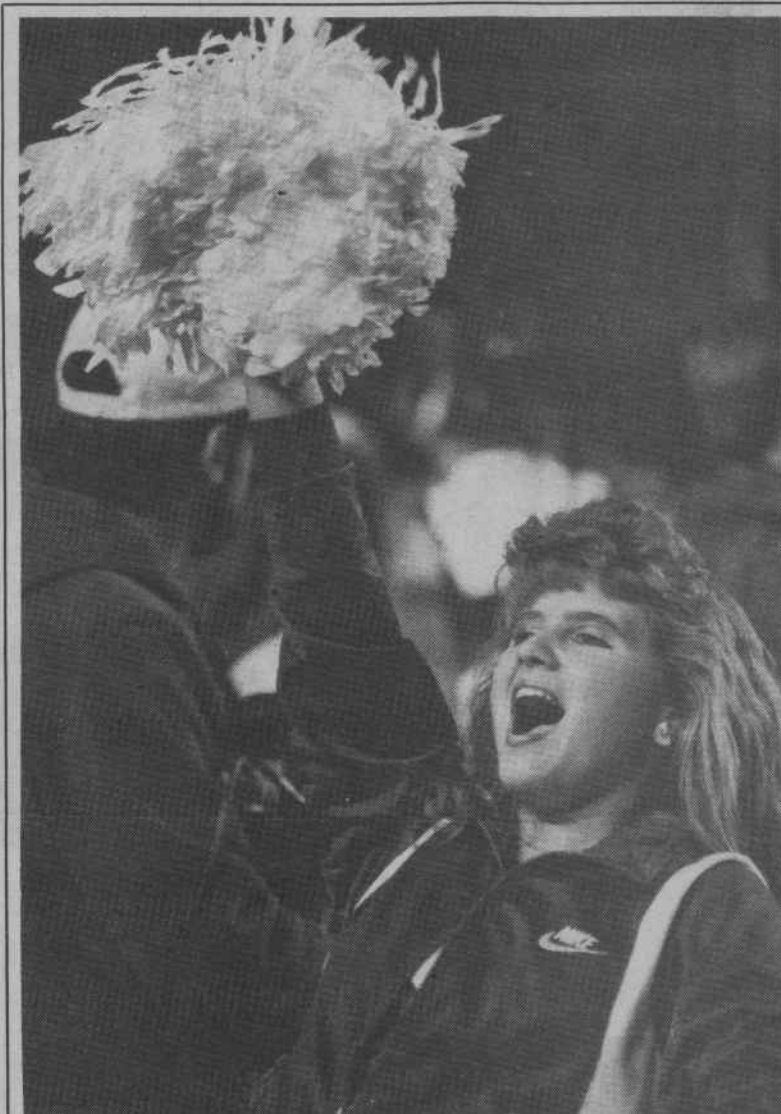
Although internationals may be thousands of miles away from their birthplaces, IFM makes them proud to call Columbia their "home away



from home."

The International Friendship Center is located at Pickens and Blossom Steets, three blocks from the

USC campus. For more information concerning the program, contact Aluri or Ray Moore at 799-3452.



KENT BROOME/The Gamecock

### Undaunted fan

Although there wasn't much to cheer about Saturday night at Williams-Brice Stadium, this junior varsity cheerleader nevertheless supports her Gamecocks in USC's 59-0 loss to Florida State.

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