

SUQ

Denise Browning

This year for the first time ever we hired a full-time Suq assistant, Jennifer Castellanos, who comes to us from the Hellenic Museum here in Chicago. She started on December 1 and immediately stepped in to help cover our Suq holiday sale, where she proved to be a natural in the store and with the volunteers.

Jennifer helped us recover from the backlog caused by the hard drive crash that disabled our POS system, which runs the cash register in the store and our inventory/ordering system. So we have been working this entire year with out an adequate inventory system. Everything is done the old-fashioned way: by hand. Kudos to our volunteers and students who stepped right in and didn't miss a beat. So this year our main focus has been working with the University to investigate a POS system for the Suq.

This year we welcomed a new student assistant, Behnam Taleblu. Behnam's Persian background and academic interests proved a great help with our new exhibit on Persepolis. He sold more of our Seneh rugs than anyone and was a great help with our Nowruz merchandise. Behnam graduated this June and has moved on, but he will be missed. Holly Rapp also graduated this year. We will miss her sunny disposition and her accuracy!

We had the good fortune to welcome two wonderful new docents, Alice Mulberry and Louise DesPres! They both have proved to be wonderful additions to our regular volunteers, Ray Broms, Jane Meloy, and Norma van der Meulen. Special thanks to Norma, who still designs many of our wonderful necklaces!

We had a book signing for Irving Finkel's new book, *The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood*, when he was here for a Members' Lecture in May. It was nice to see him back at the OI. We also carried all the books for the new Book Club started by OI Volunteer Coordinator Sue Geshwender.

We developed a new Lamassu necklace and lapel pin for the Suq. It is an exact replica of our own forty-ton Lamassu.

Carol Johnson, a former Suq volunteer, has started doing some photography for our website that should prove to be quite helpful.

For OI outreach and sales, the Suq attended three neighborhood festivals this summer: the Green Music Fest, the Logan Arts Fest, and the Wicker Park Fest. We spent most of our time educating the public about our wonderful Oriental Institute!



