

AgAbroad Newsletter

DECEMBER 2013

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS IN AGRICULTURE

DANIELS ANNOUNCES NEW STUDY ABROAD INITIATIVE

LINDA VALLADE—PROGRAM LEADER FOR AG STUDY ABROAD

Exciting things are happening in the realm of study abroad. President Mitch Daniels recently announced increasing the number of students who study abroad as one of the major initiatives for the University. In order to accomplish this, two major funding opportunities were made available.

Departments are being encouraged to identify an institution where their students can take courses required for their major. Incentive Awards are given to departments who do so and meet specific benchmarks. This will make it easier for students to plan a semester abroad.

Funding has also been provided for scholarships for students who participate in a study abroad program. While start-up funding has been provided from Central Administration, each college is expected to provide this funding for their students in future years. The College of Agriculture has recently announced the Margaret and John Weeks Scholarship Challenge which can be used as a

match for those wishing to establish an endowment. These funds can be used to establish an endowment for Agriculture study abroad students. For more information, please contact Joel Hartman at jbhartma@purdue.edu or 765-494-4785. We appreciate all of our donors who have made study abroad accessible to so many of our students.

We continue to expand the opportunities available for our students. Recently added to the array of choices is the Norwegian University of Life Sciences as an exchange partner. We have also expanded the short-term opportunities available in the summer thanks to our dedicated faculty.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the *AgAbroad Newsletter*. We appreciate hearing from our past participants and those who write articles for publication. We are thankful for all of our Agriculture study abroad supporters and wish you all a very happy holiday season.

PURDUE DAY @ VICOSA

KARA HARTMAN—INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS ACADEMIC SPECIALIST

Purdue Agriculture has a special connection and history with Federal University of Vicosa (UFV) in Brazil. On October 3rd and 4th, Dean Jay Akridge along with 15 other faculty, celebrated Purdue Day at Vicosa. This two day event was a special time to commemorate the history between Purdue and UFV and find ways to collaborate in the future.

Several departments sent delegations to learn about UFV and the opportunities to work together. The first day faculty members interacted with their UFV counterparts. They discussed various student activities, courses, and research happenings.



Dr. Mauricio Antonio Lopez, the President of the Brazilian agency, Embrapa, shared his experience as a UFV-Purdue alumni.

Brazilian students are able to come to universities such as Purdue through the Science Without Borders program. This program is funded by the Brazilian government enabling the students to study at Purdue without any cost to the student. David Ayers, the Associate Dean of International Programs, presented to more than 250 UFV students about coming to Purdue.

The delegation from Purdue visited



the Technological Center for Regional Development of Vicosa, Alcohol Unity Production, and Antonio Maria's Farm.

The President of UFV, Dr. Nilda de Fatima Soares, began the 2nd day which focused the Symposium on Bioenergy. Dean Jay Akridge gave introductory

comments which focused on the importance of the history and future collaboration.

A Gala dinner ended the special occasion. More than 40 Purdue alumni were in attendance from all over Brazil. Dean Jay Akridge honored and recognized 25 Purdue alumni ex-pats who fulfilled their career as faculty at UFV. Their contribution to furthering Purdue and UFV has been instrumental in keeping the academic relationship.

After this successful event, Purdue is moving forward with the next steps in collaborating with partners at UFV. The focus of Purdue Day at Vicosa was to recognize the history and look toward the future in research, faculty exchange, student exchange, and the Science Without Borders program.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PURDUE-VICOSA PROJECT

DR. ADRIELA FERNANDEZ—ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICA

As we enter the second decade of the 21st Century, the U.S. higher education is an essential part of the global university environment, but what are the objectives of this engagement with the world? A good place to start examining this question in a comparative and up to date context can be found in one of the most successful international ventures in university to university collaboration in which US institutions have been involved: the Purdue University-Federal University of Vicosa project. This project pioneered Purdue's global presence and helped to build a structure within Purdue to serve this task, namely the Office of International Programs in Agriculture and the Office of International Programs for the entire university.

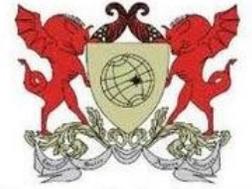
This joint venture in higher education started in 1952, with an invitation from the Rural University of Minas Gerais or UREMG. The main focus was the creation of the first program in home economics in Brazil. It continued with a more comprehensive agreement in 1958 with increased emphasis on truly working with the triad of the Land Grant Institution: teaching, research and extension on equal footing. Another focus area was the strengthening of



The Administration building at the Federal University of Vicosa in Minas Gerais.

undergraduate programs and providing graduate training for Brazilian faculty at the UREMG and in the U.S. In 1960 a M.S. in Agricultural Economics and Plant Sciences, and the school of forestry were

started. Over the next few years, six graduate programs, all of them offering master's degrees were implemented. Further changes took root with the federalization of the university in 1969, UREMG became the Federal University of Vicosa (UFV) and Ph.D. programs began (in the early 1970's) in several areas, including Agricultural Economics. In 1973, the Purdue-Vicosa project officially ended, leaving a world class university in Minas Gerais and a university ready to engage globally in Indiana.



Universidade Federal de Vicosa

While the impacts, anticipated and unanticipated, of this 23-year project are difficult to measure, it is hard to overstate them. Brazilian universities, like most Latin American universities and in particular agricultural schools, were principally teaching institutions with no commitment to the development of new technical information and to its subsequent dispersal. The plan of the Purdue-Brazil project was to jointly create research relevant to the problems of Brazilian and American agriculture, to strengthen the university curriculum, and to establish better systems of agricultural information in Brazil. To achieve these goals, Purdue University and the UFV made a total commitment to each other, by making available its best faculty and staff technicians to the project. Over the 23 years that the project lasted, 55 members of the Purdue teaching, extension, and research staff, from across our institution, served for one or more years in Brazil for a total faculty contribution of 155 man years. An additional 40 faculty members served as short-term consultants. This wealth of technical, scientific, social and cultural skills helped position Purdue to become the global university it is today.

MIND-SET CHANGE

AMANDA EMERY—VETERINARY MEDICINE STUDENT AT PURDUE



On top of the Citadelle, Amanda enjoys the beauty of this major historic landmark. The team was asked to assess the horse business (used to bring people up the mountain) for improvements to further the tourist opportunities with Royal Caribbean.

Studying abroad has expanded my global thinking and rocked my world in more ways than I could have ever anticipated as a freshman 5 years ago. Purdue has taught me to travel with a service-oriented and culturally open mindset. I've been stretched in creative thinking and had priceless experiences serving alongside fellow Boiler-makers in other countries. And not simply sitting in on lectures and sightseeing, but actually working with Romanian or Haitian students on their projects with their interests in their

communities. Living life together as we Americans had never experienced before. These are the sort of experiences that drive my passion to make a difference, using my Animal Sciences degree and soon my veterinary degree. In traveling and service, I have found the larger purpose for the blessings and education I have had the opportunity to receive. I am pursuing veterinary medicine now with a heightened sense of awareness of the impact I have the potential to make.



At the Heifer International goat and tree project near Milot, Haiti, the group built a fence and planted trees. The students talked about possibilities for utilizing solar powered electric fencing for rotational pasture management.

FOOD SECURITY RESEARCH IN KENYA

(JEFFREY) SPENCER EVANS—EEE & INT'L AGRY JUNIOR

This summer I was privileged to be part of a research group studying food security in Kenya. It was not only my first time doing overseas research, but also my first time in Africa. The experience was incredible!

The team, consisting of myself and my wonderful colleagues Marcia Croft (Purdue), Joshua Minai (Purdue) and Frannie Einterz (Indiana University), worked diligently throughout the summer to compile preliminary data on the current state of food security in rural Kenya. The primary focus was on gathering information on families with members suffering from HIV/AIDS. These families suffer disproportionately from food insecurity due to stigma in the community, inability to farm due to the illness, and extra expenses for medication and travel. Although gathering information on these families and getting around Western Kenya would have been arduous, we are forever indebted to the people at AMPATH (The Academic Model Providing Access to Healthcare) for getting us in touch with these farmers. AMPATH has been working tirelessly for over 20 years to help treat patients suffering from HIV/AIDS in Western Kenya and they were generous enough to let us utilize many of their services and resources. We travelled throughout Western Kenya and interviewed many farmers, politicians, tribal leaders and NGO's (Non-governmental Organization). We gathered and analyzed soil samples from farms in order to better grasp the deficiencies farmers were suffering from. We did market surveys to better grasp local supply and demand. We even did focus group discussions to try to better understand land policy and inheritance, a complex issue steeped in tradition and custom. In the end, I think we all hoped we could have gathered more information than we did. But as we all learned rather quickly, things move at a different pace in Kenya and one must simply accept that fact.

The data we collected was passed on to Professor Darrell Schulze (Agronomy), Dr. Steve Weller (Horticulture) and Mr. Gary Burniske (Managing Director of the Center for Global Food Security). The long-term goal is to utilize this data in order to obtain funding for a larger research project that would eventually lead to appropriate policy

recommendations concerning how best to utilize current resources and improve food security for rural families suffering from HIV/AIDS in the region.



Spencer interviews a local farmer.

But it wasn't all digging, driving and asking questions. We made many new friends and had several opportunities to travel. Our homebase was Eldoret, the fourth-largest city in Kenya and headquarters of the AMPATH program. We were housed in the same complex that AMPATH interns from around North America were housed. Universities represented included Indiana University, Purdue, Notre Dame, Duke, U. of Toronto and Brown. They were all such wonderful people brought together with a common, selfless purpose. My life would be forever better should I be able to keep in touch with even half of the amazing individuals that I met. On several occasions, I was able to get out of town for a weekend to relax. There were ample travel opportunities. Some people were able to whitewater raft on the Nile while others travelled to the coast. I took advantage of a couple of opportunities to go on safari.

In all, my summer in Kenya will not soon be forgotten. I learned valuable researching skills, made new friends and saw new things. But most importantly, I began to fulfill my need to make an impact in this world. I firmly believe that we are no better off than the poorest of our brothers and sisters, and to have an opportunity to possibly help them meant the world to me. I truly hope more opportunities will present themselves in the future. Thank you Professor Schulze and Dr. Bruce Maunder for financing this amazing opportunity!



The Research Team (from left: Gary Burniske, Joshua Minai, Dr. Steve Weller, Marcia Croft, Naman Nyabinda, Frannie Einterz and Spencer Evans)

CONTINUING STUDIES ABROAD

LAURA WILLIS—ERASMUS MUNDAS MASTER STUDENT

Studying abroad was the first time I really left the comforts of home in a big way, and moving to Copenhagen in 2010 was really challenging at first, knowing no one and not being able to read anything and not sure who you could ask for help. All Danish people are super friendly though. The independence and 'living' skills I learned there have undoubtedly changed my career path. Since graduating I've moved across country, worked in South America for a second



Laura's fellow Erasmus Mundus Food of Life (EMFOL) students celebrate Christmas together.

internship, and started my second year in an Erasmus Mundus Master's program in Helsinki. I have no doubt that what I learned during my first study abroad experience helped me get where I am in life now, as it always came up in interviews and is a major point on my résumé.



Laura and Asun work in a lab for their Meat as a Raw Material course at the University of Copenhagen.

TRANSFORMATIONAL EXPERIENCE

JADA (PHILLBAUM) HOERR—GROWTH SERVICES REGIONAL MANAGER @ CATERPILLAR INC.

I studied in Hungary with Purdue in the Spring semester of '95, and my 2nd semester as a sophomore. I studied Ag Engineering at Purdue and was thrilled to find a program that would allow me to have a semester aboard and finish my degree in the standard 4 years. It was a transformational experience for me. I had been to Europe in high school and camping trips to Canada, but it was the international exposure of the study abroad program that changed my life.

Hungary was still very much 'coming out' from under the iron curtain in '95. While I did not have depth of understanding of economics as an engineering student, I learned deep financial and political lessons from living in Hungary immediately post-communism. The culture was rich, complex, and still has fingerprints on my life.

Upon return to the US, I was consumed with learning more about the cultures of the world and continued to look for opportunities for international travel. It was this passion that led me to Caterpillar upon graduation. This

year I celebrated 16 years at the company. I have been to nearly 30 countries in my life and lived in Brazil on assignment for Caterpillar. Much of my travels are for work, yet I travel internationally for personal reasons as well. This year I went to Tanzania for two weeks with my husband. While I do enjoy the adventure of travel, that isn't the flame that was fueled inside of me in '95. Rather, Hungary made me realize my love of people and the appreciation of culture and the diversity of journeys we are on in this world - within our own country and abroad. I'm very thankful for the opportunity Purdue facilitated for me and am forever changed because of it.

Jada, in the middle, is pictured with her husband, Jeff and her four step-kids.



LIFE AFTER ABROAD

EMILY MAHON—ANIMAL SCIENCE SENIOR

Having returned to Purdue for the first week of classes since my study abroad at Aberystwyth University in Wales, I now feel that I can successfully write this article. I read piles of articles before I left, attended several information meetings and talked to a couple students about what to do and expect before and during my study abroad to the UK. I had all the packing and traveling tips down and had extensive plans on what to do while I was there. The whole thing went rather smoothly, and I experienced things and places I didn't even image I would when I was preparing. I attended the world's largest dog show (Crufts), hiked miles of coastal cliffs, navigated London on the tube, floated down the river Seine in Paris, drank a cup of healing water from the roman baths, sat in awe of Stonehenge and read the illuminated manuscript of the Book of Kells in the world largest one room Library in Dublin. I adjusted to the British culture quite quickly and before I knew it my four and a half months were gone and I was getting on a plane back to Chicago. What I was not prepared for was the adjustment I faced being home.

It wasn't the time zone that got me, but the whole being flung back into a culture I was no longer used to that hit me hard. I hadn't prepared to return like I had when I left because I didn't realize how much I had changed while I was gone. I still find myself "misspelling" American words like borne and colour. Even the simple things like writing the date were backwards. The first time I crossed the street, I was nearly run over because I automatically looked the opposite direction as I should have, like in the UK. Words I had grown to love using were not understood by the people I was talking to. I was no longer completely independent and had to follow house rules that I didn't even remember. My friends and I have a large gap in our lives that we don't really have a commonality to talk about without the conversation becoming rather one sided.

Biggest of all has been returning to school. I studied abroad in a tiny seaside town where the population of the whole town seemed smaller than that of Purdue itself. Classes never had more than 30 people and I have returned to take physics in a room with several hundred other people. I have weekly homework to remember instead of writing 1-2 big course papers during the semester. I still worry how I will do with returning to the traditional exam system and grading style that I left when I got on that plane to start my adventure across the pond. Worst of all though, has been the passing periods between classes. The first one I experienced since being back gave me a panic attack because I had not been around that many people at once in over nine months.

Nearly 3 months later, I have mostly re-assimilated back into the American culture but I can't say it was nearly as easy as assimilating into the British culture when I went abroad. I still find myself letting a little bit of the British me slip out every once and a while and people always seem to giggle. Whether it be a "cheers mate" to the woman at the "till" or enjoying a warm cup of liquid when life gets to be too "bloody" much, these little things help me hold on to the experience a little bit longer. I know that I am a child of 2 cultures and while I should do my best to be a fully functional member of this society, I should also celebrate the other culture that has carved its way into a huge portion of my life too. This is exactly what I plan to do.



Emily stands at the shoreline. Student residence halls are behind her as she enjoys her time abroad.