

AgAbroad Newsletter

JULY 2013

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS IN AGRICULTURE

FALL SEMESTER UPCOMING EVENTS

It is amazing classes will start in less than a month. The beginning of the academic year is a busy time. This fall we will welcome eleven international exchange students and heavily promote and recruit students to study abroad. If you are ever in the Purdue area, we would love to see you. Feel free to stop in our office—AGAD 26.

- August 14th—Incoming Exchange Student Orientation
- August 16th—College of Ag Carnival
- August 28th—College of Ag Ice Cream Social
- September 4th—Purdue Study Abroad Fair
- September 11th—Scholarship/Donor Dinner
- September 24th—Ag Study Abroad Fair
- September 28th—Football Homecoming
- October 1st—Ag Career Fair
- November 18-22nd—International Education Week, International Food Festival

UNIVERSAL TRUTHS

MOLLY MCKNIGHT—SENIOR—FOOD SCIENCE

This is the last blog Molly posted during her study abroad course in Scotland studying at St. Andrews.

The days until my return home have been ticking down, and so I am enjoying every last minute of this adventure! One of my dad's friends who came to Scotland asked me if I would do the past few months again, and without hesitation I said absolutely. A year ago I was still rather skeptical about the whole semester abroad idea, so it surprises me that I initially reacted with that answer. While some may see studying abroad as a self-serving chance to travel (my original opinion) and sure, to a certain extent I'll admit it is, I walk away from the experience entirely convinced of its worth. I come home with a greater understanding, albeit still far from complete, of how the world operates and a better vision for where I would like to head in the future. I've also made friendships that I know will last a lifetime. If your friend, child, grandchild, etc. is thinking about study abroad.. please encourage them!

A while ago I started collecting, both on paper and in my head, a list of universal truths. After being immersed in a range of cultures and groups of vastly different individuals, I have established the best set of truths that I believe.

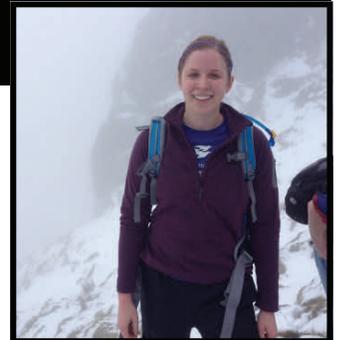
How I treat people matters. When I treat others well, they generally reciprocate. It is still an easy reaction for me to treat hostility with hostility or to disappoint people that disappoint me. However, the strategy of killing someone with kindness is almost always the best way to go. Sometimes friendships take time and effort, but they are always the best way to achieve success – especially in a work environment. I've also found that the tone of my voice has an effect on how people perceive my words, regardless of whether we speak the same language. A smile in an uncertain situation can make all the difference in the world.

People are good. This has to be the single most lesson I have learned in the UK. Going to a place where I know no one and no one knows me, I started fresh. It was up to me

to determine if and how I would judge people, who I would associate myself with, and how I should act around them. I remember Mother Theresa saying at one point – *"I see God in every human being. When I wash the leper's wounds, I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?"* The reality is that there's a glimmer of God in everyone, even the people that don't treat me well or act in a way that saddens me or simply appear to be mean. It is up to me to find that glimmer and focus on that, because only then will I treat those individuals as I should – as children of God. When I remember to do this, I am overwhelmed with the goodness of the people that surround me. They are so full of life, hope, joy, and wisdom.

Time resolves all. I have a love/hate relationship with time. Sometimes it seems like whenever I want to slow down and savor every last minute, time starts to fly and the period of life I'm in disappears quickly. Or when all I want to do is hit the fast forward button on life while I'm in a tough stretch, the hours and minutes tick by at a snail's pace. But at the end of the day, time is really a marvelous thing. Knowing that life goes on, unrelenting, can be the best comfort of all. The first week or two in a new place can seem daunting and overwhelming, but I thankfully remember that after an awkward stretch of transition all will be okay. During periods of uncertainty or frustration I know that if I stick it out, my uncertainty will turn in to understanding and frustration into peace. Answers are always revealed in time, and this provides a sense of comfort.

With all of these lessons in mind, I return home to a world of familiarity but a future of uncertainty.



Through the fog and snow Molly hiked a Munro, a Scottish mountain that exceeds 3,000 ft.

MAYMESTER IN COSTA RICA & PANAMA: SUSTAINABLE SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS IN THE TROPICS

KIMBERLY LUTZ—SENIOR—ANIMAL SCIENCE

Service learning projects extend textbook knowledge into practical, real world applications. A group of 11 Purdue agriculture students of various majors experienced firsthand the impacts of service learning during a 3 week course to Costa Rica and Panama in May of 2012. Under the direction of Dr. Lori Snyder, formerly a professor in the agronomy department, the students were involved in developing and implementing such projects. The primary projects I led were: constructing water filtration systems for one community and animal healthcare education in the elementary school.

Having previously studied abroad in 2011 to Costa Rica, I was thrilled to get the opportunity to work again in these communities where I had built relationships and established connections.



Eleven students rest after a rainforest hike.

The people of Costa Rica are so welcoming and receptive to visitors. I feel as though Costa Rica is my second home! Collaboration with the communities was key in making these service learning projects a success. We worked primarily in the Iroquois community, which is located near EARTH University close to the Caribbean coast. We also worked in the Pangola community near the Nicaraguan border. Pangola is now the site of a newly opened ecotourism company, Cinco Ceibas, which will have an economic impact on the area. Both communities were cooperative and willing to help with any portion of the projects.

The first project conducted was the development and implementation of water filtration systems. This was a multifaceted project, requiring the most time out of all the service learning projects. In the spring semester leading up to the Maymester course, Sam Noel, Jenaya Hooks, and I wrote and won the Hydrologists Helping Others Grant through the Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences Department. This grant, along with the Spring 2012 Community Service Learning Grant, provided the funding necessary to execute the project. The major objectives completed for this service learning project were: educating the Iroquois community about their water supply, conducting water quality tests in Pangola and Iroquois, and installing the filtration systems. We directly impacted 23 families (115 people in total) by providing them with a water filtration system and reached out to more families through our educational workshop, all of which took place in the Iroquois community.



The water filtration materials included buckets, PVC piping, caulking, gravel and sand which were found locally.

We were able to come up with a design using local materials almost entirely. Once completing the water filtration system, each of the 23 homes received a handout (in Spanish) outlining how to use the system as well as any troubleshooting.

Another major aspect of our project was water safety education. To address this objective, we decided to hold a workshop at the Iroquois community center. The program began with a poster presentation on water quality, common water contaminants, and how to purify water. We then proceeded to explain the specifics of our water filtration system, such as how it works and how to clean it. Samples of water were brought in from various community homes and used as demonstrations for the water test kits.



Jenaya works with the water test kits to determine the water quality.



Students construct the filtration systems.

The animal healthcare service learning project sought to introduce the Iroquois community youth to the basics of taking care of animals. We were able to teach a group of fifth and fourth graders as well as a group of kindergartners, impacting over 50 students.

One of the key elements in service learning is the concept of reciprocity. While the Maymester students provided a service to the Costa Rican communities, they also gained knowledge on cross-cultural collaboration. I can say that I honed my communication skills as a result of working with another culture, something that can only happen through study abroad programs such as this one. The entire experience was truly rewarding in every aspect and I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to study abroad and work in a country such as Costa Rica.



The kindergarten class enjoyed learning about animals.

WITNESSING HISTORY AT THE VATICAN

KELLY BEEKER—SOPHOMORE—AG ECONOMICS & AG COMMUNICATIONS

Studying abroad with Purdue provided me with many extraordinary experiences. As I left the USA, I knew I was going to have a great time. However, my experience was better than I could have ever imagined! Not only did I get to see things I learned about in history, I got to be a part of history. Our group for Spring Break 2013 had the opportunity of being in St. Peter's Square as the new pope was announced. Running to the square with my fellow Purdue



Kelly along with the other 25 Purdue students witnessed the naming of the new pope in St. Peter's Square.

students, being surrounded by people from all over the world, and feeling the excitement of everyone around us was the cherry on top of

an amazing study abroad course. I was able to make memories with friends I already had, become friends with other students on the course, and also learn from the Italians



Students learned about prosciutto, dry-cured ham, from the Parma region in Italy.



Dr. Mario Ferruzzi, a food science faculty member leading the course, explained how the cheese is molded and wrapped in heavy plastic which imprints the company name, number, and date. The students were amazed at all the cheese in the storeroom of the Parmigiano Reggiano factory.

that we met along our journey.

I am excited to begin my journey this year as an International Ag Ambassador. As an ambassador I hope to inspire others to study abroad, create memories of their own, and also show international students coming to Purdue all that Indiana and the United States have to offer!

TASTING THE ITALIAN FOOD

MELISSA GALIZIO—JUNIOR—FOOD SCIENCE

I was given a great opportunity last summer in 2012 to participate in a Maymester to Italy. We visited three amazing cities while we were there including Parma, Florence, and Rome. This course was geared towards food science students so we visited many vineyards, wineries, and food production facilities. Visiting these places showed us the similarities and differences between food production in Italy and in the US. It also opened my eyes to how strict we are in the US with our food safety. It was definitely very different, but interesting to learn about.



Twenty-nine students participated in the Food, Wine, and Culture of Italy course during the summer 2012.

churches and baptisteries, and we were able to visit their local park. In Florence we visited museums including the Uffizi, which houses the painting *Primavera*. We also visited historic sites like the Pitti Palace where we toured the palace and its beautiful gardens. Our last stop was to Rome where we toured the Colosseum, Roman Forum,

and the Catacombs. There was a lot of history at all of these sites, and it was exciting to see them in person after learning about them in the classroom.

Not only did we learn about food production, but we also visited many museums and historic sites while we were in Italy. In Parma we visited many

and the Catacombs. There was a lot of history at all of these sites, and it was exciting to see them in person after learning about them in the classroom.



One of the most exciting things while I was in Italy was the food. It was interesting to see how much the food changed from North in Parma to central Italy in Rome. I saw and ate a lot of Parmigiano Reggiano while I was in Parma. Parmigiano Reggiano is made in Parma so at almost every meal they served us some. We even found Parmigiano Reggiano sticks on the McDonald's kids menu. When we traveled down to Florence we were in the heart of Tuscany where there was a lot of Chianti wine. The Chianti region is found in Tuscany so while we were there we visited a Chianti winery and learned how it is grown, harvested, and processed. And during our visit to Rome I found a lot of bruschetta and spaghetti alla carbonara on the menus. It was definitely an interesting experience to see how even in one country the cuisine can be so different.

I learned a lot about Italian food, culture, and history and I found it all very exciting. I enjoyed this program so much that I decided to participate in another study abroad, but this time I will be going to France for two months. I am really looking forward to it, and I'm sure it will be another great experience.

HOW HAS STUDY ABROAD BENEFITED YOU IN YOUR CAREER?

KARA HARTMAN—INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS SPECIALIST

Several students ask if employers value a study abroad experience or an internship more? There is no doubt that employers value study abroad, but the interviewee must market their skills and competencies learned.

A hot topic within international education is the value of study abroad. How does study abroad benefit the students for their future job? Students who study abroad gain valuable skills including adaptability, cultural sensitivity, problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, leadership, flexibility, confidence, responsibility, self-reliance, communication, open-mindedness, assertiveness, and inquisitiveness.

According to the 2012 IES Abroad Recent Graduate Survey nearly 85% felt that studying abroad helped them build job skills, of which 885 felt the experience was 'effective' or 'very effective' in helping them do so.



"Studying abroad broadened my horizons. I am more aware of globalization, diversity, development and poverty, and many other perspectives. Living in a foreign country makes me more independent and confident. I have improved my problem-solving and decision making skills. I learned how our world is very diverse and interesting."
-Xun Zhou

According to the 2003 RAND study that surveyed 135 human resource managers from 75 companies, Candidates with international study experience are likely to possess key skills such as:

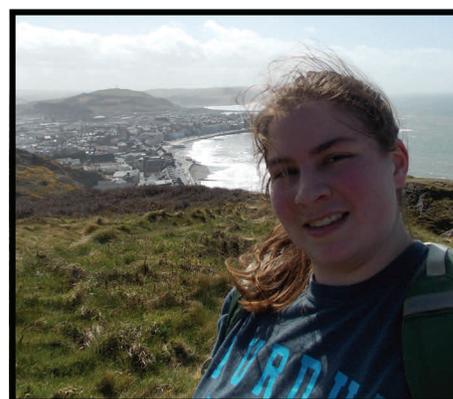
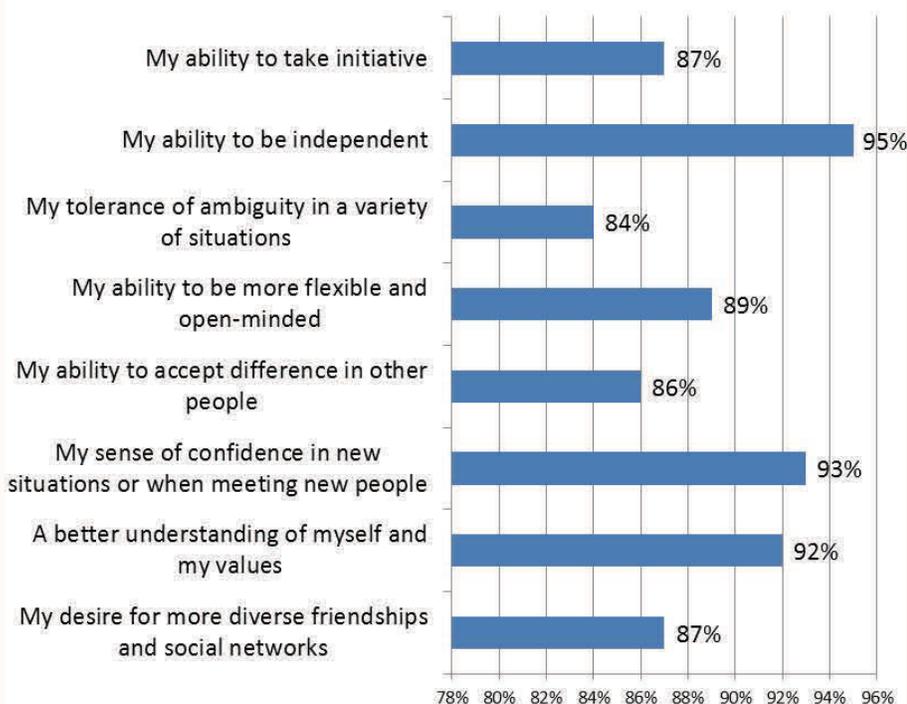
- Cross-cultural communication skills (98%)
- Independence (97%)
- Cultural Awareness (96%)
- Maturity (94%)
- Flexibility (90%)



"Studying abroad isn't just living in another country, it teaches you how to deal with situations you've never been placed in before, and never thought about before. It teaches you about living with other people in other cultures, and how to adapt quickly and easily to completely new situations."
-Ashley Norris

We would love to hear from you. How has study abroad benefited you in your career? Email your story and let us know if we can quote you in our publications to AgAbroad@purdue.edu.

My Study Abroad Program has Contributed to:



"I was unaware of the experiences and personal growth that I would gain from my trip and now I can't imagine what my life would be without having studied abroad."
- Emily Mahon