

# AgAbroad Newsletter

OCTOBER 2015

## LINDA VALLADE HELPED STUDY ABROAD GROW AT PURDUE JESS LOWENBERG-DEBOER— ASSOCIATE DEAN AND DIRECTOR IPIA

When Linda Vallade started working in International Programs in Agriculture (IPIA) in 1989, Purdue College of Agriculture averaged one student per year who studied abroad. Now, Purdue College of Agriculture leads the university in study abroad participation. Last year 322 agriculture students had international experience. Recently, 30 percent of Purdue Agriculture graduates with a bachelor's degree have participated in a study abroad program.

Linda was hired at Purdue in November 1989 to help administer the Niger Applied Agricultural Research Project (NAARP) funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In 1993 when Dean Vic Lechtenberg started putting more emphasis on study abroad, she became the "International Academic Programs Specialist" and worked closely with Assistant Dean Mike Stitsworth. By the mid-1990s they reached 50 students per year studying abroad.

Linda played a key role in one of the earliest Purdue Agriculture study abroad programs to Ukraine, funded by the US Information Service (USIS). From 1992 to 1995 there was a student exchange program with the institution that became known as the National Agricultural University. Each summer a group of Purdue students spent a semester in Ukraine and each fall the same number of Ukrainian students came to Purdue. A total of 51 Purdue students participated over four years.

In 2003, Linda Vallade and Mike Stitsworth won the Malone Award for their decade of study abroad leadership. This award is given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the internationalization of campuses in the Land Grant University system. It is given by the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC – now known as the Association for Public and Land Grant Universities – APLU).

That same year Linda was part of the study abroad team that won the annual Purdue Agriculture Dean's Team Award. This award is presented to a group of individuals whose teamwork contributes to the School of Agriculture

in ways that could not happen if the team was not in place. The Study Abroad Team composed of Mike Stitsworth, Karl Brandt, Zinaida Breschinsky, Prudence Miller, and Linda Vallade. They were honored for their contributions to internationalizing the School of Agriculture.

In 2004 Linda became the Purdue Agriculture Study Abroad Team Leader when Stitsworth moved to a new role. She oversaw the continued growth of study abroad with semester, summer, maymester, and spring & winter break programs. Last year there were semester study abroad programs with 62 universities Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and China. Purdue Agriculture summer programs were located in Brazil, France and Taiwan. Maymester programs were in China, Belgium, Netherlands, Ireland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Norway, and Zambia. Spring break programs were in Costa Rica, Colombia and Ireland. The winter break program last year was a service learning opportunity in Haiti.

Linda was a tireless promoter of study abroad. She spoke to classes and worked the crowd at the study abroad fairs. She networked with the departmental undergraduate counselors and helped them understand how study abroad could fit into a plan of study. She made sure that the accommodation and accreditation of our overseas partners coincided with the expectations of Purdue students. For deserving students who thought they could not afford to study abroad she found grant and endowment funds to help make the decision easier.

Linda retired on June 5th after more than 25 years of service in Purdue International Programs in Agriculture. A great way to honor Linda's work and commitment to study abroad would be a gift to the Vallade Memorial Fund which provides scholarships for agricultural study abroad students. If you give by check, please make it payable to the Purdue Foundation and send to Ag Development, Pfenfender Hall Rm.108, 715 W State St., West Lafayette, IN 47907. Please make a note of the Vallade Memorial Endowment on the comment line. Contact Joel Hartman, Purdue Agriculture Advancement, +1 765-494-4785 if you have questions about contributing.



After 25 years of service,  
Linda Vallade retires  
leaving a legacy.

"Studying abroad allows you to take a step back on life and see the world from a new perspective. It gives you a rich and full understanding of other societies, cultures, and people."  
-Emmalee Koester-

"While studying abroad I learned how much of who I am and what I assume is actually my cultural conditioning rather than known expectations."  
-Ali Martin-

# EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

MOLLY BOHLANDER— JUNIOR, AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT

My name is Molly Bohlander and I am from Darlington, Indiana. I just completed my sophomore year in Agribusiness Management. I just finished spending a semester in Dublin Ireland, taking classes at University College Dublin.



During a weekend getaway, Molly went to Galway to see the beautiful Cliffs of Mohr.

Throughout my travels I visited Cork, Galway, Belfast, Killarney, and Howth, just to name a few, in Ireland along with a wide range of other countries. Every weekend trip I took, I was constantly amazed by the beauty of the country and also the traditional/historic aspect that is continued to be conserved. Throughout the semester, I had the

opportunity to climb the Giant's Causeway, walk along the Cliffs of Moher, explore the Gardens of Wicklow, and awe in the beauty of the Ring of Kerry. I was also able to discover the small fishing town of Howth to try my first Irish coffee, see the cathedrals of Christ's Church and St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, experience my first Guinness in the Guinness Storehouse, and visit the last stop of the Titanic before it set sail into the Atlantic towards America.

As part of the study abroad experience, my classroom experience was very different than being at Purdue. One main difference was that my classes were mainly made up of lectures and very little projects or homework. I had only completed a few papers and very minimal homework assignments when I realized exams were already quickly approaching. My exams at UCD were worth a lot more points, considerably 50-70% of my course grade depending on the professor. These exams were open ended and essay based exams. The professors were very helpful in preparing me but also very laid back. The guidelines for

homework and presentations were very broad and many assignments were up to the individual student on how they decided to present a specific subject.

There are many things about Ireland that are very closely related to the US; however, there are also many differences. I feel that Ireland, along with many European countries, have been able to hold on to many traditional aspects of their culture. There is a lot of history within every city/town that I have visited and it has been an amazing experience to learn about all the people and big movements that have helped shaped this Ireland into what it has become today.

I loved so many of the experiences I was able to take advantage of while being abroad. Before I had to leave Ireland I was able to visit the Dingle Peninsula, travel through the mountains/countryside of Connemara, and explore every inch of the city of Dublin. Outside of Ireland I had the opportunity to travel throughout the cities of Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris, Florence, Rome, Milan, Athens, Santorini, and London before finding my way back to the US to complete my internship for the summer.

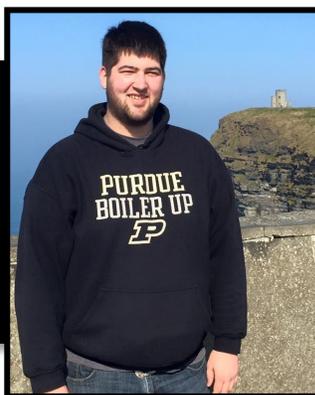


The green lush Irish countryside is something Molly treasured along with the friendly people.

I learned so much about the history and the people of Ireland. I can also say that the experience has helped me grow as a person, learning to do things on my own and being a part of another culture outside of the United States. It has given me a chance to better connect with others and capture a unique understanding of the world that could not be obtained any other way.

# A WORD FROM AN INTERNATIONAL AG AMBASSADOR

LOGAN ENDICOTT— JUNIOR, AGRIBUSINESS



*"I studied abroad because I wanted the opportunity to meet new people, explore the world, and learn about new cultures."*

# TREASURING FRIENDSHIPS AND SIGHTS

WHITNEY BLANKENBERGER— SENIOR, ANIMAL SCIENCES



During a semester abroad, Whitney took advantage of traveling to various countries including Greece.

During spring of 2014, I spent the semester studying on the beautiful Emerald Isle otherwise known as Ireland. Ever since I was a kid I have always loved traveling and I knew in college I wanted to go to Europe. I went as soon as I could, the spring of my sophomore year. One of the main reasons I chose Ireland is because of the university I studied at, University College Dublin (UCD). I found out that I was able to take classes that would transfer back so I would not be behind in my studies.

I soon learned that one, Irish people are extremely friendly and two, nothing ever happens on time and they are okay with that. Looking back on my trip I realize there are two things that I will treasure forever. The first being the friendships I made with people from all around the world. Many people I just randomly met through my travels and we would end up hanging out the

rest of the time in that country until we left. The second thing being the sites I got to see. When I was studying in Ireland, I not only traveled around the country but I also ventured out into other parts of Europe. My travels included Scotland, London, Spain, France, Greece and Poland. My favorite place I visited was Santorin in Greece. This also might partially be due to the fact it was the first time my skin had seen the sun in four months. You think people exaggerate when they say it rains in Ireland everyday but they are not, true me, it does.

One of the main reasons I was able to travel so much was due to the scholarships I received. The money I received helped pay for my housing and flights so I could use money I had saved to see more of the world. I am extremely thankful for the donations and generosity of others and Purdue's continuous support of study abroad.



Whitney enjoyed being immersed in Ireland while talking classes.

# TRAVEL IS MEDICINE

MATTHEW RODGERS— SENIOR, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

It takes compounds from outside of your body to alter (or heal) your body into a more desirable state. It takes experiences from outside your culture, comfort zone and country to shape your mind into a state that is healthier for the global community.



Matthew capitalized on learning the culture of England touring around the country.

At Purdue I study Landscape Architecture. I am in a studio with 15 other designers. Two-thirds of us are from the United States and of that group half of us are from Indiana.

There isn't much of a heterogeneous vibe among us. Many times I would notice strong similarities in my design to those of the other Hoosiers in the room.

My semester in England was full of different kinds of mental shifts. My daily routines were close to opposite from what I was used to: I had a forty-five

minute walk to my classes which only happened twice a week, they had no definite beginning or end and took place in a building that was next to a highway and not a part of a traditional university campus. I struggled to acclimate

myself to the teaching styles used until March. But once I got the hang of it I was able to alter my note-taking, studying, and task management. I left England with notebooks, digital files and a video to prove what I had learned.

Now that I am back at Purdue I see a tremendous shift in my view of assignments, my approach to challenges and also my desire to design spaces with a heartbeat that is different from most found in the Midwest.

My friend Jake and I were chatting about travel recently. He was in Dublin the week before I was and we agreed that it was an amazing city. We also agreed that we like post-travel us better than the people we were before we left the country. Both of us were in Dublin with friends from Purdue and we noticed that being across an ocean with them really altered our friendships. Experiencing different cultures, surviving mishaps and meeting new people with our old friends really expands the bounds and meaning of the friendship we had before.

To sum it all up I would say that having traveled to England and lived there for a semester I now feel more full than I ever have before. It blows my mind every time I remember that some of my friends have not studied abroad.

"Traveling the world can be captured on Instagram. Loving and living with the people you meet can never truly be captured at all, whether by photos, words or memories."  
-Matthew Rodgers-

# EXPERIENCING RURAL ROMANIA

EMMA HOPKINS— SENIOR, AGRICULTURE COMMUNICATIONS



During the course, Emma spent time with a host family learning about Romanian culture.

For most of my life, the country of Romania was a giant question mark. Literally, the most accurate fact I knew was that Transylvania was there, the home of Dracula. That was more than enough information for me to join six other agricultural communication students on a

study abroad and service-learning experience to rural Romania. The most challenging part was learning that I would be staying with two Romanian farm families.

As a group, we worked with Heifer Romania, an in-country office of Heifer International, and observed farms that are part of the organization's two projects, "Chance for All" and "Milk for Orphans". Both programs provide Romanian farmers with Holstein heifers. In the second element of both projects, families who receive heifers are required to give the firstborn female offspring of their Holstein to another farm. In "Milk for Orphans", milk is collected from families that receive Holsteins and is donated to an orphanage for disabled children.

On our way to the Rasca homestays, the view reminded me of the Rocky Mountains, but these mountains were somehow more mysterious. While posing for pictures on the bridge, we began hearing bells. They got louder and

louder until the source of the jingling arrived at the bridge: three Romanian dairy cows walked casually in front of us on the road, swinging their bell collars and oblivious to the occasional car that carefully passed them as they sauntered home for dinner. What a sight! The scene perfectly introduced us to Rasca and the life we were about to slip into for a few days. We learned the routine quickly in Rasca. Rodica wakes up around 6 a.m. to start preparing for the day while her husband goes to work in town as an electrician. She milks the cows by hand at 8 a.m. and lets the calf out of her pen so she can drink from her mother. Rodica slops the pigs with a mixture of table scraps, boiled potatoes and crushed corn. We helped her water the garden and tried our hand at milking, which was not as easy as it looked.

What I found was a corner of our world that did not even resemble the one I belong to but held just as much love and high moral standards. Like on my own farm in Westfield, Indiana, these people had a love for their animals, which could not be missed. They talked to the cows and hogs just as I do with my sheep and cattle. They care for their livestock diligently and treat them with the compassion they deserve. They made use of every egg, strip of meat and drop of milk they collected.



On this service-learning course, Emma was able to see the beautiful sights of rural Romania.

## ALUMNI MENTORS NEEDED

DONYA LESTER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PURDUE AG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Ag Alumni Mentoring Program began during fall semester of 2012 as a pilot program with 10 mentoring pairs. Since then, the program has grown to regularly include 50 or more mentoring pairs per semester.

In the program, students are matched with mentors from a database of College of Agriculture alumni who have indicated an interest in mentoring and have completed a professional profile. Mentors make a commitment of one semester, and they are always given the opportunity to opt out before a match is made. There is no face-to-face meeting requirement for this program, so mentors can participate wherever they live and work. Mentoring pairs work out a schedule of regular contacts that work best for them. The program's success depends on having many potential mentors of all ages and from a diverse range of career pursuits.

Alumni interested in being included in the database can fill out the mentoring [profile](https://ag.purdue.edu/agalumni/Documents/Mentor%20Profile-%20updated.pdf) located online at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/agalumni/Documents/Mentor%20Profile-%20updated.pdf>



More information about the [program](https://ag.purdue.edu/agalumni/Documents/Mentor%20Profile-%20updated.pdf), including a link to frequently asked questions, can be found at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/agalumni/Pages/Alumni-Mentoring.aspx>

Kaitlyn Rumsey is the student manager for the program for 2015-2016. Questions about the program can be addressed to Purdue Ag Alumni, Kaitlyn at [rumsey@purdue.edu](mailto:rumsey@purdue.edu).