



photo submitted by
Brandy Groff, Bonn, Germany
Academic Year 2010

JayhawksAbroad

/ a newsletter from the Office of Study Abroad

Fall2010

Study Abroad Fair
Today, Wednesday, September 8
10:30-3:30
4th Floor, Kansas Union

BrookeAbney

Fall 2008
Umbra Institute
Italy

If charm, chaos and cool weather sound like a terrible tri-fecta, you have obviously never been to Baile Átha Cliath, commonly known as Dublin. Ireland has amazing attractions, city life and a growing economic status. It also has a rich history that is impossible to ignore as you walk the cobble streets or listen to the folk bands sing traditional songs. The culture creates an atmosphere of creativity and kind-heartedness that leaves you with the feeling that there are places in the world that are just too good to miss.

I spent my summer in Dublin, living and working through the EUSA program to gain professional experience. I worked with a local public relations firm to promote the 50th International Eucharistic Congress. The program allowed me to really experience what life abroad was all about. I got to know local Dubliners their attitudes toward American students. I was also able to live with students from all over the USA, Spain and Ireland, gaining perspective on their lives and making new friends. My Spanish roommate, Jorge, taught me to cook and I spent my World Cup season cheering on his team.

My primary duty was to prepare an advertising plan for general awareness, volunteer and sponsorship campaigns for the week-long world event. Most of my time was spent researching the Ireland tourism industry and gaining insight as to why international visitors come to Ireland. I was also given the opportunities to work with film production crews for promotional DVDs, strategize the fundraising and sponsorship campaigns, and draft a report outlining the direct economic benefits of corporate sponsorship.

I was able to take the tool set I had learned in the William Allen White School of Journalism



and directly relate it to the work I was doing. My courses in Message Development and Principles of Advertising allowed me to be an influence in media selection, campaign development and public relations. The professionalism I learned in the J-School set me apart from other American students. I was able to impress my supervisors and fellow co-workers with my writing skills, demeanor and work ethic.

I appreciated the frequent tea breaks, a time for me to really gain insight about the culture of Ireland. It was interesting to hear the different expressions and varieties of the English language. Although we spoke the same language, I would find myself lost listening to conversations like an outsider trying to decipher slang and figures of speech. However, the Irish, as a collective group, are the friendliest people I have ever met in my life.

While the advertising trade does not have a large presence in Ireland, there are still many opportunities at press relations firms, media companies and event planning companies. I recommend future students do research about the city prior to their arrival. The Dublin internship program was a fantastic way to accomplish my goals of securing an internship and professional experience while studying abroad and exploring a new culture.

LaceyBaldridge

Spring 2010
Paderno Del Grappa
Italy

The time I spent in Italy was easily the most exhilarating time of my life. The breathtaking view of this small town will undoubtedly linger in my mind for years to come. When I decided to go abroad, I envisioned myself getting lost in Paris or Rome amidst the most beautiful people in the world. Looking back, I couldn't be happier with my decision.

I first arrived in Paderno Del Grappa by bus on a Sunday afternoon in mid-January. I remember feelings of excitement and nervousness while wondering if I had made the right decision.

All my apprehensions disappeared when I woke up that first Monday morning to a view that was completely surreal. I decided, right then and there, that I was not going to miss a minute of this exciting adventure. We planned our travels for the upcoming extended weekends and 10-day breaks to beautiful cities throughout Europe. Although these extravagant vacations were thrilling, it was nice to get away from the hustle and bustle once back in Paderno.

The most valued part of my study abroad experience was the amount of amazing friendships I developed. While traveling across Europe or studying in Paderno, I always seemed to be surrounded by new faces. I was eager to learn about their lives, where they came from, their opinions of Americans, and their future endeavors. It was remarkable to develop friendships with people all over the world and I now have several places to stay in future visits.

While in Paderno, I developed friendships with other students to a degree that most people will not reach in their lives. Because we were together 24 hours of the day, traveling together to countries we didn't know existed,



and experiencing the opportunity for growth in other cultures, I can truly say that these are the friendships I will value for a lifetime. Looking back, I realize that our journey together has changed all of us.

From sky-diving in Interlaken Switzerland to riding a camel in Marrakech Morocco, I quickly became an expert at world traveling. While traveling abroad, you discover your independence from home and unexpectedly establish a new place in your heart for America. I always compared the American culture to the countries I visited, but only found few similarities. In these countries, I never felt the selflessness or the goodwill that Americans seem to possess. Americans are very blessed and I believe that going abroad increases your appreciation in more ways than one.

Coming back to America, I have noticed unbelievable changes in myself. I am much more easily adaptable and am not afraid to take risks. After getting on the wrong trains, getting separated from friends, missing flights, and losing passports, I believe I have become a more self-assured individual who is capable of just about anything. Thanks to this wonderful experience, I now understand how to create a life that is full of opportunity. The sky is the limit!

CarolynBattle

Summer 2010
EUSA Internship
London

When I first came to KU, I knew I wanted to Study Abroad. When and where was the question. Being a double major made it difficult to fit studying abroad into my tight schedule, but I wanted to make room. I flip-flopped between different summer programs, and I finally realized that the Internships in London was the right program for me. This summer program was perfect for me because I was able to stay on track with my classes during the semester yet still get the true study abroad experience.

As I got closer to the summer, I found out what my internship was. I was ecstatic to find out that I would be working at an international media buying company. When it came time to board the long flight, I was just as excited as I was nervous. Luckily, the few girls I knew on the trip made it much easier. I was really surprised how nice our flats were and what a good location we had. The first week really was a blur, between finding our way around the tube, adjusting to the time change, and preparing for our first day of work!

The program consisted of internship work four days a week, class on Fridays and cultural events each week, visiting London's famous museums. We also took two trips with the program. One trip was to historic Stonehenge and Bath and the second to beautiful Canterbury. In our spare time, my roommates and I ventured around London and travelled throughout some of Europe.

Some of the highlights of London for me include celebrating my 21st birthday in London, seeing Paul McCartney live, going to a show at Shakespeare's Globe, and seeing Oliver and Les Miserables (where we saw Nick Jonas perform!).



Outside of London, my roommates and I took two bigger trips, and several smaller trips. Our trip to Paris was amazing. We couldn't help but be extreme tourists but it was worth it to check out The Louvre, Notre Dame, and all of the French food we could find. Of course we saw the Eiffel Tower, which we could see from our hotel room! One of my favorite moments was when I saw a German couple get engaged on the highest viewing platform of the Eiffel Tower.

We also took a trip to Dublin, of which we had heard, "if you can't have fun in Dublin, you can't have fun." Our hostel was not scary which we were thankful for, and we took in all we could in a weekend. We even took a day trip to Cork and kissed the famous Blarney Stone. Dublin was especially fun because we met up with another group of KU students who were doing the same program in Dublin!

We were able to make good friends with other students from different schools who were on the program too.

My best advice to students considering Studying Abroad, would be to do it! The staff at the office of Study Abroad are super helpful and can get you going on the right program for you. I had an amazing experience, getting both relevant and fun work experience while being able to travel and explore London and other cities in Europe.

BrandyGroff

Academic Year 2010
University of Bonn
Germany

Looking back on this past year, I can hardly believe all that I have seen and experienced. The day that I nervously waved goodbye to my family and boyfriend and flew across the ocean to a new environment seems like ages ago. I've undoubtedly accomplished more in this one year abroad than any other individual year of my life. I was exposed to new cultures, new traditions, new ideas, and new perspectives. I've been pushed outside of my comfort zone, been faced with unexpected challenges, and have certainly experienced a multitude of ups and downs, all of which have helped me develop as an individual.

I never thought of myself as someone who would study abroad. I wasn't sure if I could make it or if I would like it; but it turns out that I did make it and I actually loved it. I easily met many other students in my same nervous position and we quickly formed strong friendships that will undoubtedly last far past my year abroad. Together we've shared some experiences that I imagine will remain amongst the best of my life. The Bonn, Germany Program offered by KU was incredibly well organized and allowed me numerous opportunities to truly experience the German culture and to branch out on my own.

Sure it was hard to adjust to some things like a different school system, using public transportation, paying for water and bathrooms, not having air conditioning, and having it rain constantly; but having the opportunity to develop my German skills, meet with German families and students, volunteer at an elementary school, experience the Christmas markets, the Carnival festivities, Oktoberfest, big flea and bike markets, fresh fruit and vegetable stands, delicious bread, and biking around town all outweighed the negatives.



I learned to love to drink coffee and talk for hours. I've come to appreciate soccer and sunny days. And I've been able to see myself in a new light after facing difficulties that were completely new to me and not easily fixed, considering my normal comforts and conveniences were no longer in the picture. I've certainly developed an independence that I didn't realize I needed, and it has led me to try many new things, each of which are continuously helping me grow into a well-rounded person.

Throughout the year, I had the opportunity to travel to many places I hadn't expected to visit, thanks to Germany's fantastic central location. I've visited Scotland, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, Greece, Britain, and the Netherlands. I now feel capable of traveling anywhere and as a confident navigator.

The best part of study abroad in Germany was simply being around Germans and the German culture. Sure, Germany is highly industrialized, modern, and influenced by American culture, so it may in many ways seem very similar to the United States, but all of the small quirks and long-standing traditions do really make Germany something unique. I would recommend studying abroad in Germany to anyone, because there is something fantastic about Germany which only the experience can convey.

BenGerrard

Winter Break 2010
Social Welfare in Turkey
Turkey

I traveled to India with a KU Social Welfare program in the winter of 2010. We spent two weeks exploring the role that social welfare agencies play in serving the “poorest of the poor.”

In the Sundarban we visited a medical centre built by the local community in order to lower the high rate of infant mortality experienced in so many developing countries. From here our group of twelve climbed aboard an old diesel powered boat that served as the area’s ambulance, and cruised upriver to visit one of the islands. Once we arrived we climbed aboard two flat-bed motorcycles. These bikes took us in to the centre of the island passed mud huts where couples were beating rice straw in their courtyards and children played cricket in dried up rice paddies.

Everyone we passed on this 30 minute ride looked at us almost in disbelief and every smile was returned five fold. I have never seen strangers who looked so enchanted to have visitors and who were so quick to laugh and smile with people whom they did not know and shared little verbal language with. For the rest of my time in India I made a point to greet everyone who I made eye contact with by offering a smile and almost without fault their faces lit up in return.

We saw many other amazing sites in India, including the magnificent Taj Mahal and Red Fort, but it is the warmth of the people and the curiosity in its children that touched me the most. Outside of the Taj Mahal there are scores of annoying and relentless hagglers and hawkers. It was amidst this throng of opportunistic tourism that I was struck by a little boy who I doubt was any older than twelve.



No taller than my lowest rib he kept pace with me all the way up to the Taj Mahal’s gates. No doubt he had the same souvenirs to offer as everyone else but using perfect English, boundless charisma, and indefatigable tenacity he verbally tussled with me all the way in and then two hours later all the way out from the Taj Mahal’s gate, for the ten minute walk back to our tour bus.

I gave him a few rupees just to reward him for the witty verbal sparing he had engaged me with, the likes of which would have done any college debater proud. I would give almost anything to go back to the Taj Mahal and find him and make sure he has parents and that someone is making sure he goes to school. Instead the lesson that I have to take away from that study abroad trip is that there are millions of children all over the world who could have done just what he did, and who instead of being fed, educated, and given a chance to rise above their poverty, they are out working the streets or picking through garbage just to find rags. It is this thought that keeps me dedicated to my social welfare studies and the dream that I will one day be able to stop and talk to children like these and offer them something better than a few rupees and a sorry excuses for not having more time.