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## Study Abroad Alumni Reach Out



"It completely opened the floodgates. It gave me openness in all sorts of dimensions, not just talking to someone new, but taking boundaries down when you're home. It made me adapt and really aware of all the things that I don't know [about the world]," said student and Global Ambassador Cari Deschak of her study abroad experience. She and other select students in a new program initiated by the Center for International Education are reaching out to gain exposure across campus about what the study abroad experience is. The Global Ambassadors program aims to increase the University's awareness of study abroad opportunities. The nine Global Ambassadors themselves have previously studied abroad and have studied with a vast number of programs

both within and outside of Salisbury University programs, providing a range of views and resources for students looking to go abroad.

Global Ambassadors give presentations frequently in different classes, letting students know that studying abroad is an option for any student who wants to go.

"We get to use our expertise on specific areas that people who work here don't know and we can show kids the diverse opportunities and that they are able to go abroad and do what they want to do," said GA Payge Jennings, who studied for a full academic year in South Korea.

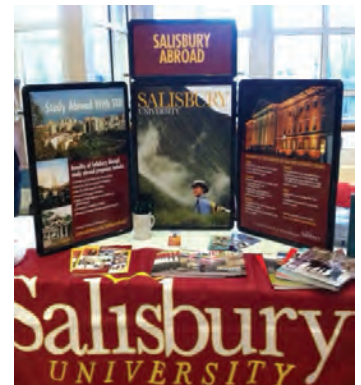
Global Ambassadors also attend events around campus, such as Open House for potential new students and relieving the anxieties that parents often have about their student studying overseas in a foreign country. In addition, they attend informational sessions for students so that prospective study abroad students can gain insight from the perspective of someone who has already gone abroad.

"It's being able to get the opportunity to open the channels and bridge the gap be-

tween the people who work here [at the Center for International Education] and students," commented Deschak about the program, who spent a semester traveling to many countries on a cruise ship with the Semester at Sea program.

Both Jennings and Deschak agreed that the opportunity to study abroad was one not to be overlooked by students.

"It allowed me to understand things about America that I didn't know or realize before and allowed me to learn more about other cultures. It made me more open, a better adapter, and a better communicator," said Jennings. "I'm happy to help anyone who wants that experience!"



## Purdue Students Take On Montreal



*Students with Dr. Roche at the JMUC in Montreal, Canada.*

The Purdue School of Business sent its brightest students to the John Molson Undergraduate Case Competition (JMUC) from February 16-23, 2014, in Montreal, Canada. The competition is the largest international case competition for undergraduates, only inviting 24 schools from around the globe to compete.

Out of 24 schools, four were from the United States, eight were from

Canada and the rest were from various countries such as the Netherlands, Australia, Singapore, China, Brazil, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Salisbury University students were led by Dr. Oliver Roche, the director of International Business and Global Programs, and competed in two categories – a three-hour case each day for three days and one 24-hour case. The cases, dealing with strategic planning for a business' future or rebranding their image to fit a new market, were provided in English and had to be presented in English, providing a few difficulties for the competitors whose first language was not English.

Cases were released by JMUC leader, and within the time limits, each team had to read the case, identify the problem(s), come up with solution(s) and an implementation plan, and put it into a PowerPoint presentation. For the three-hour cas-

es, no internet or notes were allowed, but for the 24 hour case, internet access and notes were permitted. Salisbury University led the division for all of their three-hour case presentations. The University of Hong Kong won the division after their 24-hour case presentation.

In their free time, students were free to explore Montreal, enjoying ice skating and the local restaurants.

"[The competition] was intense, but it was amazing to see my team's and my cohesiveness," said SU senior and case competitor Gloria Majchrzak. "The experience made me feel more confident about myself with my knowledge and presentation skills. I would do it all over again in a heartbeat."

*"Traveling —  
It leaves you  
speechless,  
then turns you  
into a  
storyteller."  
- Ibn Battuta*

## International Faculty of the Month

Profesora Helena Hill grew up in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She has studied both in the United States and in Europe, and she currently teaches Portuguese at SU. Much of her family still resides in Rio de Janeiro. In terms of living abroad, she said, "These have been remarkable experiences not only for the fond memories, stories and lifelong friendships, but for the things that I have learned about myself and the world along the way. Living abroad has helped me become more

open-minded, develop a global perspective, appreciate diversity and develop skills such as the ability to deal with challenging situations." While living abroad means living away from her family, she believes that there is always something new to learn about American culture. "From a personal perspective, it is great for personal development and cultural discovery," she said. "From a professional perspective, there may be opportunities to gain new insight by working in a diverse

environment, to network with American colleagues, and to gain desirable professional experience by conducting research and/or teaching abroad."



## From Sisters to Friends: Phi Mu Crosses Cultural Lines

There's something to be said for students who decide to go outside of their comfort zone to talk to another student whose native language is not English. But that's just what the sisters of Phi Mu who decided to be conversation partners do – they meet with international students who are studying abroad at Salisbury for the semester, or even a full academic year, and become their friend.

Oftentimes, the sisters have learned more from their international comrades than they ever thought possible. “They were really open to our culture and excited to branch out and meet people outside of the exchange program, which I didn't expect,” said Meghan Washington, a junior from SU and a conversation partner paired with a student from South Korea.

Washington, like many other conversation partners, has realized that this is more than a volunteer experience; it's a chance to make a friendship across borders and find commonalities between cultures and people.

No matter the occasion or the location, humor has been one value that these ladies have shared with their conversation partners. Senior student and international relations major Mina Aden shares that her conversation partner, in true American fashion, is often hilariously blunt with her, such as texting her, “Hurry

up ... I am hungry” in regard to their meeting up over some food in the Commons. This kind of humor is continued throughout different cultures, and their different backgrounds are not a problem, but a source of admiration.

“When they first saw me, they loved my hair,” said Washington of her Shirley Temple curls. “They asked me if my hair was natural, and when I said it was, they kind of admired it with an ‘oooh’ because it's something that many people have to pay for.”

Overall, the program has been



*International Students with Conversation Partner Coordinator Kara Mercer take a trip to the Salisbury Zoo.*

rewarding and enriching for the many students who offer their time. To many native SU students, the opportunity comes across as a volunteer experience at first, but by the time their international friends must return to their home countries, SU students have formed a strong bond across borders and cultures, and received more than they thought possible. “It has been so incredibly rewarding,” said Conversation Partner Coordinator Kara Mercer. “All of the students are so full of love and are passionate about sharing their own culture and learning about ours in the U.S. I have totally changed the entire direction of what I am going to do post-graduation because of the incredible experience.”



*Lora Wolz ('11), a Social Work major who studied abroad with Salisbury Abroad: Ecuador*

## So You Think You Can't Study Abroad: Social Work

For a select few majors at Salisbury University, studying abroad becomes increasingly more difficult to do as students advance through programs. Here's some ways the social work major can study abroad:

- Once every two years there is a faculty-led program by Professor Amy Habeger to Hong Kong for social work majors. The next program is in January 2015.
- Sophomore year is a great time to earn General Education requirements in almost any program abroad.
- The earlier you begin planning, the easier it is to start the study abroad process.
- Global Ambassador Kerry Mahony is a social work major and can provide support and answer questions for students.

# A Welcome (and Look) Back

*Natalie Brady is a senior at Salisbury University who studied abroad in Madrid, Spain, in fall 2012.*

I was overly excited for the occasion. I had missed my own Welcome Back Reception when I studied abroad in fall 2012, and studying abroad had become a vital part of my life since then. I couldn't let that experience go and I was really excited to *finally* meet other people who had been just as positively affected by their more recent trips abroad as I had at the Welcome Back Reception on February 13.

Two fellow Global Ambassadors greeted me in front of the Nanticoke Room, and I put my nametag on and where I studied (Madrid, ¡te echo de menos!), and walked in. I was surprised to walk into a room with elegantly set tables. I had been in this room many times before, but it felt different with dining tables in it. In front was a projecting screen, which I assumed would be used later. I sat down and made friends with yet another Global Ambassador (we're everywhere) and was soon joined by a sorority sister who studied in London and Paris over winter break. A few more students joined us, and while we had never met, we all started talking like we had already known each other. We all wanted to be here, and that made a difference in the way conversation flowed. For me, it was a really nice chance to see new faces who were eager to talk about and listen to other study abroad stories.

Noel Habashy, study abroad advisor from the Center of International Education, gave us a brief introduction and sent us on our way to grab dinner. On the menu was pesto alfre-

do pasta, London broil, rice pilaf, a vegetable medley and chicken champagne. Catered by the University, I was absolutely shocked that everything was really delicious. Usually, food from the Commons was pretty good, but this was next level good. I chose a bit of London broil, rice pilaf and a healthy portion of chicken champagne. I also decided to try something new and get the pesto



*Natalie Brady at El Escorial outside of Madrid, Spain.*

pasta. It took me back to studying abroad, where I was trying new foods constantly. If I could try blood sausage in the streets of Madrid, pesto pasta should be the least of my worries. I made the right choice, as the creamy noodles ended up being one of my favorite parts of the meal.

Noel continued on a little bit while we ate, posing questions such as “what was your favorite thing about studying abroad?” and “did you have any cultural miscommunications?” One girl shared her story of how she had to have emergency surgery to take her appendix out in Madrid, while another boy shared his story of how he was looked at because he was so tall and different-looking from

the locals in India. I soaked every story up, mesmerized that people had such different and crazy experiences than I had. But we all shared one thing – our experiences changed us for the better. We all somehow learned to roll with the punches and trust ourselves in uncommon situations.

After all of the story time, it was hard to get us to stop. Noel had ignited the flames inside us once more, but he brought us back down to a simmer by introducing a speaker from Career Services. It's tough to explain and market to employers, let alone people, how studying abroad changed you. I listened curiously as intercommunication and studying abroad were ranked highest among what employers look for. I thought to myself, *this would have been great to hear right after I had come back* and was kicking myself on the inside for not being able to make this opportunity before. But, better late than never.

I think I had found what I was looking for at the Welcome Back Reception. I found the connections I had wanted to make with other SU students after I came back from abroad. They understand me, they *get* me. And while all of our experiences were unique, we shared the spark studying abroad had put into us – the spark that told us, “Hey, there *is* a world outside of the United States and the people there are marvelously different.” I can only hope that students not only go abroad, but also come back and make the connections with other students that I did and learn how to incorporate their experiences into their lives as students at SU and beyond. After all, the experience only dies if you let it.

## **SALISBURY INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER**

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Natalie Brady

***A newsletter highlighting  
Salisbury University's  
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