MOSAIC

Picture Your World Photo Contest

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Return Service Requested
A hint of apprehension is apparent when Logan talks about his adventures in the Middle East. Thus far, his work has enabled him to travel to both Europe and Asia for extended visits.

Back in 1993, he received a Fulbright Scholarship which took him and his wife to Germany, where they resided for six months along der Bodensee. At the time, Logan was studying particle dynamics at the Limnological Institute at the University of Constance.

Laughingly, Logan continues, “What he didn’t tell me is that it is a tourist area for Germans, Austrians, and Swiss!” To add to the urgency of the situation, Logan’s wife traveled to Germany pregnant, and gave birth to their daughter...
Summer at Hof

What could Amir from Iran, Tawhir from the U.S.A., Natia from Georgia, Nora from Egypt, and Andreas from Germany all have in common? Actually, they are all friends on Facebook, but they didn’t meet electronically using the Internet. They all participated in a three-week college summer school program offered at Hof University of Applied Sciences in Hof, Germany. Students from over 21 countries were represented for the summer school session.

In July, Joe Oakes, senior lecturer in IST at Penn State Abington, and five of his students traveled to Hof to participate in the international summer school program in business IT.

The session offered two programs, SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software (from a programming or business aspect) and Microsoft .NET Web Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) programming. The Microsoft course, which features students working in small groups on realistic cases and developing an IT strategy for an enterprise, was taught by Oakes and a German professor at Hof.

The ERP systems course, an introduction to the world of SAP, provides fundamental knowledge in logistics processes and an overview of different processes in front of international learning.

The Penn State students enjoyed sharing classes with international students from all over the world. The group also participated in company excursions to the Siemens Medical MRI manufacturing site, the BMW manufacturing plant, and Dronco Cutting Abrasives location. Weekend trips included the capital city of Berlin and the fabulous cities of Munich and Nurnberg.

Four of the five Abington students received scholarships from DAAD, The German Academic Exchange Service, which covered tuition and room and board as a percentage of the airfare.

The trip was a powerful experience of multicultural exchanges of sightseeing adventures, food, movies, and educational values and a chance to establish long-term long-distance friendships.

Spring Program

In March 2008, the Abington campus welcomed 15 business students from the institution 4,000 miles to the east. In an effort to welcome them to campus, the visiting students were each assigned a “buddy” from Penn State Abington. “Welcome correspondence before the trip, the visitors had a good idea what to expect by the time they arrived at Abington.

The The Most Rewarding Challenge (continued from page 3)

embarrassment, I made my first French friend, and I soon learned that I was Regis’s first American friend. He was a musician with a vast knowledge of Paris and a very interesting life that he so kindly welcomed me into. Although his stature was atypical of a French man, standing over 6-feet-tall, his charm and distinct nose indicated a Parisian that. We spent many days flitting around the city, him exposing me to an authentic view of Paris and me opening him to a new culture as well.

I don’t know if Regis could sense the loneliness in me, like a dog can smell fear, or that he found in me a kindred spirit, but he invited me to accompany him to weekly dinner parties. Filled with bohemians and businessmen alike, we would gather in tiny apartments throughout the city, barely large enough to accommodate the crowd. We would play music, eat food that celebrated a different culture each week, and enjoy life.

I carefully observed this eclectic mélange of participants ranting about theatre, food, politics, or whatever topic sparked interest. Slowly, as the weeks passed and my culinary repertoire ranged from Moroccan to Mediterranean and everything in between, I began to see emerge in myself the cultural knowledge that I envied emerge in myself. I finally realized that among these interesting souls I had found the home I so desired.

Though my time in Paris all too quickly came to an end, I was able to bring with me more than souvenirs from my study abroad experience. With many new friends and memories, Paris proved to be the most rewarding challenge I could have asked for.

Looking to the future, I am able to see how the classes I took and the experiences I had added to more than just my journalism degree. In Paris, I developed the confidence to approach a stranger, the ability to relate to a wide variety of people, and also managed to cultivate a broader view of not only other cultures, but of my own world. The study abroad experience gave me invaluable skills that will enhance my career as a journalist, and also my sense of self.

KAUST Connection (continued from page 7)

He holds a visiting professor title at the Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT) in China as well, where he not only meets with faculty and students as a colleague, but is also able to directly advise students if he chooses.

Logan is no newcomer to international travel, but Saudi Arabia is, as he puts it, “a very different part of the world.” While the apprehensions are present, and while he does not expect to leave the protected community of KAUST without guidance and companionship initially, he has hopes of gaining new perspective and comfort within such a foreign culture.

Along with a member of his research team and a University official, Logan took his first trip to Saudi Arabia in May for a ceremony with the Excellence in Engineering Award. Since the University is not scheduled to be completed until September 2009, there were no walls to serve as filter between Mid East and West.

“The academic and cultural immersion experience that has been planned for the visiting German students is a natural outcome of Penn State’s firm commitment to internationalization. Penn State Abington brings the world to our campus,” said Dolores Rafter Arevalo, coordinator of international affairs. “Students who are interested in German language and culture will have the opportunity to meet and spend time with the Hof students. In addition, the visit of the German students to our campus may inspire Abington students to participate in the one-for-one student exchange.

In return, the University of Hof welcomed a group of ten Penn State Abington information science and technology (IST) students, faculty member Joe Oakes, and Arevalo to Germany for a week later in March. The Abington students participated in a joint IST project with ten German students. The culmination of the week-long stay was team presentations about their projects.

Penn State Abington Forges Special Relationship with German University

Building A Relationship

Over the past decade, Abington and Hof University have forged a mutually beneficial relationship starting with small-scale student exchanges and working towards a more substantive partnership. Hof University of Applied Sciences was established as part of the Bavarian Institutions of Higher Education in 1994. Enrolling approximately 1,200 students, its mission is “to provide a relevant, practical education at a high academic level to satisfy the needs of a modern economy.” The University is located in a scenic area of northern Bavaria, the city and surrounding area has a population of approximately 33,000 and offers many cultural diversions.

In many respects, the educational philosophy at Hof is compatible with the goals of Penn State’s BSB and IST programs. Program offerings at Hof include business management, international management, business information technology, marketing engineering, and information technology. Internships are also available.

The school has an international office to assist foreign students. Hof’s “Club International” pairs each visiting student with a German student mentor to help answer questions about university life and leisure activities.

Although the academic calendar is different for the German students enrolled in the school’s degree programs, Hof presents a curriculum during the fall semester exclusively for foreign exchange students that allows them to study core courses, encounter international business environments, and satisfy the intercultural requirement of general education. Students enroll in junior-level courses in business administration or information science technology (taught in English) while they gain valuable international experience.

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