International Night 2013

An evening of food, fun and celebration of community! This year’s event, held on January 31, 2013, featured cuisine – prepared by students – from a wide range of cultures in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, Australia and the Middle East. Students performed traditional dances and contemporary songs, modeled fashions from their national cultures and got to see a demonstration by the campus Judo Club. Look for announcements about next year’s event coming in the fall!

The UWG Study Abroad Spectrum – Traditions and New Paths

This year, UWG students are participating in fifteen different campus-developed programs and a variety of other study abroad opportunities. This edition of the newsletter focuses on the longest-running program on campus – the Foreign Language and Literatures Department’s Spanish program, currently located in Heredia, Costa Rica -- and a brand new endeavor in UWG’s School of Nursing.

Spanish Language Study in Costa Rica

Heredia is a colonial town, home to the National University, and an important cultural hub for Costa Rica located outside of San José. It is also home to UWG’s Spanish-immersion study abroad program. The Intercultura Centro de Idiomas is staffed with instructors who hold classes for students meeting their Spanish language requirements, while the professors from the University of West Georgia hold classes for the Spanish language majors. Because of the school’s location, excursions to rainforests and volcanoes are part of the program experience.

Dr. Julia Farmer of the University of West Georgia’s Foreign Language Department discussed the four-week program, which was moved to Costa Rica in 2010 from its previous site in Mexico. Farmer taught in Costa Rica at the Intercultura Centro de Idiomas during the first few semesters of the program. During the four-week program, students study Spanish.

The School of Nursing Goes to Hungary

The University of West Georgia’s School of Nursing is slated to have its first study abroad program within the next year. Twelve hand-picked nursing students will be traveling with Professors Horvath and Dever to Semmelweis University in Budapest, Hungary, from May 3rd through May 26th. Both professors completed their Bachelor’s and Master’s of Science in Nursing here at the University of West Georgia. Both women have worked together in Michigan, as well as in ICUs, hospice/home care, and mental health.

In the fall of 2011, Prof. Pamela Horvath visited the city of Budapest and put in a call to Semmelweis University to initiate a dialogue about a study abroad program within UWG’s School of Nursing. Semmelweis University is the oldest medical school in Hungary; it has schools for medicine, ophthalmology, midwifery, and nursing. It is widely recognized as one of Europe’s leading medical centers and it embraces over 12,000 students from around the world; foreign students account for a quarter of the student population. Semmelweis University is also the largest independent health care provider in Hungary, covering six percent of the nation’s health care needs. Semmelweis University has several study abroad programs, but the only other American program is based at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. In December 2012...
Brian McGuinness was born in New York, but grew up in Connecticut. He attended Syracuse University in New York for his Bachelors of Political Science and attained his Masters of Political Science from Campbell University in Buies, North Carolina. McGuinness taught United States History, World History, and World Geography at a high school in Fayetteville, North Carolina for one year while completing his M.A. Brian wanted to get back into teaching after completing his Master's, but he did not want to work in another American high school. Instead, he was hired to teach English in a Japanese school; McGuinness held this job for five years while living in Japan.

Japan is the most homogenous country in the world, with most of its population being wholly Japanese. Brian experienced a lack of English signage and instructions at every turn, causing him confusion in the supermarket and other areas of daily life. His ability to listen to and understand the Japanese language is excellent after five years in Japan, but without anyone to help him or explain cultural differences he faced difficulty. Because of his experiences teaching in Japan and facing the feeling of illiteracy, Brian is uniquely qualified to help international students with problems they may not even be aware exist for them. Brian's position as the Assistant Director for International Students is designed not only to help international students here at the University of West Georgia navigate their classes and interface with professors, but to help them navigate in areas that United States citizens take for granted. McGuinness says he is impressed by the International Student Club at UWG, which is a strong and active force on campus, allowing international students to know one an other and help each other to learn how to live as a part of American culture.

Tianyi Lynn Li was a student of the Zhongnan University of Economics and Law in her hometown of Wuhan, China for two years before her transfer to the University of West Georgia. Tianyi was a Finance Major at ZUEL, but upon transferring to the Richards College of Business within the University she switched to an Accounting major for its practicality. Zhongnan University’s program requires its students to transfer to an American university, so Li knew that she would eventually be studying abroad. She will be studying here at the University of West Georgia for at least three semesters.

There are several differences between Zhongnan University and the University of West Georgia. ZUEL had one large exam at the close of the semester, but at UWG, we have interim exams and projects as well as course work. According to Li, in China, professors teach lessons and do not make themselves available to their students in the same fashion as American professors. There is a kind of invisible barrier erected that prevents Chinese university students from asking their professors questions and conversing. Li says there is definitely more work while attending the Richards College of Business here at the University of West Georgia. Li described Wuhan, China as a big city, which is steadily becoming more international. Li described Carrollton, Ga. as a friendlier place than Wuhan.

Li is involved in the International Student Club. She enjoys studying abroad and meeting new, interesting people. Li speaks three languages: Chinese, Cantonese, and English. She also enjoys studying at home and cooking meals from home with her friends. All international students are required to take American History courses; Li is particularly interested in the Civil War and its effects on the American public. The biggest complaint Li says international students have is the lack of public transportation here in Carrollton. Li says that in China life follows the typical cycle of school, graduation, occupation, marriage, and children, which serves only to set up the same cycle for those children. Here in the United States at the University of West Georgia, Li has discovered that life does not have to be circular and that she can create her own path. Tianyi Li intends to pursue a Master’s Degree in Accounting before returning to China.
**Spanish Language Study**

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The program is now headed by Dr. Euisuk Kim and Dr. Jeffrey Zamostry. Dr. Farmer says that the Spanish Department is working toward a program of study in Concepción, Chile. The Spanish program's study abroad unit, previously housed in Mexico, is a long-running and well-established program that has been around for twenty-five years. –KSW

**SON in Hungary**

Prof. Horváth and Dr. Kathryn Grams, Dean of Nursing, went to Budapest to discuss the program with the faculty at Semmelweis.

Here at the University of West Georgia, the student to teacher ratio is 1:10 while at Semmelweis it is 1:6. The UWG students participating in the program will be working in a 600 bed military hospital as well as in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Cardiac Care Unit (CCU), two types of clinicals that are difficult to get into here in Carrollton, as there are not enough spaces to accommodate nursing students. Prof. Dever and Prof. Horváth stressed the Caring Curriculum used here at the University of West Georgia; it focuses on the relationships between faculty and student, student and student, student and faculty, and finally student and patient/staff. Dever is interested to see how the students of Semmelweis perceive caring, especially in terms of Hungarian pride and nationalism.

Professor Dever says that this study abroad program will give students a new look at the health care system and how caring is viewed outside of the United States. As School of Nursing faculty, both Dever and Horváth work with students who speak English as a second language. At Semmelweis University, English is not widely spoken and UWG’s nursing students will be able to experience an “ESL” lifestyle firsthand. The students chosen for the program are a diverse group composed of both traditional and non-traditional students of varying ages, including one international student. The program will allow its students to gain 90 hours of clinicals, including ICU and CCU hours, providing them with a certificate of completion that can be part of their résumés. The study abroad program has four planned excursions; they are going to the Semmelweis Medical Museum, the Golden Pharmacy (which is a pharmaceutical museum), the House on the Rock, and a small town outside of Budapest. –KSW

**Tsedey Mekbib, a Biology/Pre-Med major here at the University of West Georgia, hails from Ethiopia’s capital city, Addis Ababa. She has had a life-long aptitude for the sciences; her interest lies in the causes of disease and their cures. Tsedey’s mother sparked her childhood curiosity in figuring out how the body was made both healthy and ill with her insistence that Tsedey needed this or that vegetable or fruit in order to retain a bodily balance.**

Tsedey will be graduating in April and she has put in several medical school applications. She was last year’s International Student Club President, and this year she is the Secretary of UWG’s chapter of the American Medical Student Association, which is involved with helping prospective medical students pursue their goals. They provide networking with local medical professionals, tips for the MCAT, and tips for admissions. Her hobbies while here at UWG include cooking with roommates, hanging out with both friends and new acquaintances, and the discussion of new and varied ideas. Tsedey speaks English and two Ethiopian dialects. She likes to play tennis and workout.

Tsedey stays in close contact with her immediate family in Addis Ababa. She Skypes and emails them daily. At the beginning of her career as a student, Tsedey’s mother was apprehensive about her leaving to study abroad. She and her sisters lived in a home-based, sheltered environment. Some of her extended family, composed of uncles and cousins, live around Atlanta, Georgia, which influenced her decision to apply to schools in Georgia. Tsedey and several of her friends applied to different schools in the United States in order to leave their comfort zones and explore the world. She first enrolled at Brewton Parker College in Mount Vernon, Georgia for one year until she heard about the University of West Georgia.

In comparison to Carrollton, Tsedey says that Addis Ababa is much larger, busier, with many more people. Here it is uncommon to see large groups of friends walking and talking together; American friends come in twos and threes. Americans have a sense of personal space not attended to in Ethiopia; Tsedey said that she was holding hands on the quad with a visiting friend and was asked if she were a lesbian. Girls in Addis Ababa form such close relationships that it is appropriate for them to hold hands and otherwise touch one another.

Tsedey appreciates the dedication of the science departments here at UWG. She says that she likes the fact that our professors take the time to explain theories behind the sciences, engaging the students to learn the “little details of molecular interpretation on a small scale.” Tsedey also says that it is important to learn Organic Chemistry; it is the most challenging science but that it is the basis of life and animal survival. Tsedey does not have much experience with the social sciences, but upon enrolling in the Interpersonal Relationships Psychology class she had the opportunity to learn the interpersonal skills of discussion and argumentation. She enjoys the friendly environment which allowed participation in such open-minded discussions. Tsedey aspires to learn every day, via both good and bad experiences. She sees them all as opportunities to better herself. She advocates open-mindedness in order to study abroad and learn new lifestyles and encourages others to leave their comfort zones to become more open and well-rounded people. –KSW

**Study Abroad Spectrum (cont. from p. 1)**

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**Students: Studying abroad this summer? Get your cameras ready!**

**Study Abroad Photo Contest**

Information will be available on our website soon! www.westga.edu/isp