

Study Abroad

“The gratefulness Ghana gave me . . .”

“Dancing with Ghanaian Children” is the title of this photograph, taken by MSU Nursing major Brooke MacKenzie, participant in the summer 2004 Ghana study abroad program. The photo was the grand prize winner in the 2004 Office of Study Abroad Photo Contest. The MSU “dancer” is Aaron Adler, international relations major in James Madison College.



Last summer, nursing student Cassandra Boyse participated in a new study abroad program, *Ghana: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*, which took place for the first time July 5–August 13, 2004. The program, a collaborative effort of the Colleges of Communication Arts and Sciences, Nursing, and Social Science, combines an introduction to Ghana’s historical, social, political, economic, and cultural factors with a field study of the country’s contemporary and traditional health care issues.

Judging from Boyse’s summary of her experience, the program was eye opening, with a lasting impact that students won’t soon forget. Said Boyse: “Throughout my life I have always felt thankful and grateful for all that I have, and even guilty at times for the copious blessings in my life. Nothing confirms this more than going to a place where very few to no people have what you have. As a future nurse, seeing how healthcare functions in other parts of the world greatly impacted my standards of practice and personal philosophy.”

During the first three weeks of the program students learn about various aspects of Ghanaian history, culture, and development, while the second three weeks focus on health care needs, delivery sys-

tems, and practices, both traditional and Western, in Ghana. Students spend three days living in the village of Danfa learning about health beliefs, health problems common in rural Ghana, and local food and customs. They experience first hand what a typical day is like for rural Ghanaian women and have the opportunity to ask questions about health beliefs and practices.

Classroom and field learning are augmented by a series of excursions that take participants to Cape Coast to see castles formerly used for the slave trade and to Kumasi, capital of the Ashanti Region which boasts the largest open-air market in West Africa. They also visit Bonwire to observe kente cloth weavers and Kurofuforum to observe the “lost wax” method of brass making. Other experiences include an excursion to Volta Lake, the world’s largest man-made lake, and Kakum National Park to get a bird’s eye view of the rainforest on a canopy walkway. These experiences are rounded out by visits to hospitals, schools, craft centers, cloth markets, museums, and other cultural institutions. Students sample local cuisine and are introduced to traditional art and music.

Connie Currier (College of Nursing), a former Peace Corps volunteer in Ghana, says the program

aims to give students “an appreciation for the way half the people in the world live—that is, in rural areas, that the majority live in poverty—20 percent of the world lives on less than \$1 a day, and the fact that women in rural parts of the world typically do at least three or more hours of work per day more than men do.”

Boyse says her time in Ghana reminded her that the things she takes for granted are a privilege in most countries.

“I never had been thankful for a shot, clean sheets to put on patients’ beds, or water to give them when they are thirsty,” she said. “My hope is to never forget the generosity I received from the people of Ghana when they did not even have enough for themselves.”

The students’ experience is captured in the Ghanaian expression “dead *obruni* clothes,” which starkly reflects the chasm between the students’ life experiences and the daily lives of the people they met in Danfa. *Obruni* means foreigner—usually translated as white person—in Twi, the predominant language in Ghana. “Dead *obruni* clothes” are what we would call used clothes, which you see most people wearing in the rural areas. Ghanaians assume that the original owners must be dead; otherwise, the clothes would never have been given to strangers.

As of this writing, a new group of 12 students prepares to travel to Ghana from May 15–June 24, 2005.

—*Connie Currier and Inge Steglitz*



Students spent three days in the Ghanaian village of Danfa. Here Cassandra Boyse, Brooke MacKenzie, and Emily Huntoon (front to back) conduct interviews with village residents.

MSU Offers More Study Abroad Programs in Africa Than Any Other U.S. University

MSU study abroad programs take students to seven countries on the African continent: Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, and Swaziland.

A majority of these programs (eight) take place in the Republic of South Africa.

Programs in the Republic of South Africa

- Conservation and Biodiversity in South African Parks and Game Reserves
- Cultural Heritage of the New South Africa
- Doing Business in South Africa
- Education, Society, and Learning
- Pre-internship Teaching
- Race Relations
- University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban
- South Africa and Swaziland: Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resource Systems

Programs in Other African Countries

- Egypt: American University in Cairo
- Egypt: Historical Perspectives of Veterinary Medicine and Natural Resources Management
- Ghana: A Multidisciplinary Perspective
- Kenya: Behavioral Ecology of African Mammals
- Kenya: Society and Ecology
- Mali: Ethics and Development
- Senegal: French and African Studies in West Africa

During the 2003–04 academic year, 68 MSU students participated in study abroad programs in Africa, up from 55 students in 2002–03 (a 23 percent increase).

As of this writing, a new program is being developed at the University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania.

Innovative Study Abroad Conference Held at MSU

Institutional barriers to study abroad, best practices, and solutions to common problems were the focus of an innovative conference hosted by Michigan State University in December 2004. Some 90 administrators from the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) institutions—Big Ten schools and the University of Chicago—spent two days at the conference, “Identifying Campus Barriers to Developing Campus Support Networks for Study Abroad.”

Realizing that study abroad initiatives will ultimately be successful only if supported across the campus, conference organizers invited campus teams composed of representatives from the following offices: registrar, financial aid, budget, development, study abroad, international programs, and undergraduate academic deans.

In small groups, participants discussed financial, administrative, and academic/curricular issues and

barriers. “Peer groups” from across the participating CIC universities met to compare notes on various administrative practices on their respective campuses. Each institution’s campus team also met to formulate integrated strategies for study abroad. Participants identified themes in need of further internal and national discussion, including the impact of new technologies on study abroad, affordability and fee structures, impact assessment, optimal organizational structures, diversity issues, and strategies for advocacy and public relations. The conference ended with a call to action for institutions to begin implementing new ideas and for participants to continue the dialogue.

John Hudzik, MSU’s acting provost and dean of International Studies and Programs, and Jan Jacobs, vice provost for Undergraduate Education and International Programs at Pennsylvania State University served as conference moderators. Drawing on per-

McPherson Leads Study Abroad Commission

Shortly before leaving MSU at the end of 2004, President Peter McPherson was selected to chair a new federal commission charged with making recommendations to increase study abroad participation among U.S. college and university students. The Bipartisan Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program is the vision of the late Senator Paul Simon. His proposal envisions fellowships for 500,000 students per year to study abroad.

The commission is made up of 17 members, 13 of whom were appointed by congressional leaders and four by U.S. President George W. Bush. William B. DeLauder, former president of Delaware State University, has been hired to serve as executive director of the commission, which was preparing for its third meeting in April 2005.

Federal funding for the first year of the commission’s work was set at \$250,000. “We were pleased to

raise an amount equal to what the government gave us,” McPherson stated recently. “I think we’re off to a pretty good start.”

Under McPherson’s leadership, MSU developed one of the largest study abroad programs in the nation. “At Michigan State and at many other universities across the country we have made study abroad an integral part of the expected undergraduate experience, but many more students need to participate,” he said. He added that he was pleased that his appointment had bipartisan support from House and Senate leadership.

A briefing book for the commission, *The State and Future of Study Abroad in the U.S.*, was prepared at MSU under the leadership of John Hudzik, dean of ISP and acting provost, who cochaired a research and analysis working group comprising a dozen study abroad professionals.

A number of important international education

sonal experience as well as trend data, guest speakers Dave Cospers (Ford Credit) and Stuart Jeffares (DaimlerChrysler Corporation) spoke to the value of study abroad for students in today's business environments. Out-going MSU President Peter McPherson introduced the agenda for the newly formed Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program Commission (*see related article, below*). Other speakers included Earl Kellogg (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Patrick O'Meara (Indiana University), Gene Allen (University of Minnesota), Jerry Ladman (Ohio State University), and Riall Nolan (Purdue University). Staff from the MSU Office of Study Abroad served as additional moderators and session facilitators.

Conference proceedings are to be posted on the CIC website at www.cic.uiuc.edu

—Inge Steglitz

organizations have expressed their support and willingness to cooperate with the new commission. Among them are the Institute of International Education, which administers the Fulbright fellowship program; the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange; the Institute for the International Education of Students; and the Council on International Educational Exchange.

NAFSA: Association of International Educators has been a major contributor to this initiative, having convened the 2003 task force on education abroad chaired by Senator Simon and former Secretary of Education Richard Riley. NAFSA is currently hosting the commission's documents until its own website can be developed.

A forum on issues raised by the Lincoln Study Abroad Commission has been established on the web sponsored by six major education organizations. It can be accessed at www.nafsa.org/lincolnforum

MSU Federal Credit Union Awards 13 Scholarships for Study Abroad in 2005

As reported in the spring 2004 issue of *MSU International*, a \$2.5 million endowment from the MSU Federal Credit Union (MSUFCU) has greatly increased available scholarship funds for MSU students studying abroad. Below are the scholarship award recipients (with major, program, and destination) announced during the endowment's second year.

Winter Break 2005

- Laleah Fernandez (journalism), *Land of the Incas, Peru*
- Heidi Graunke (finance), *Historical Perspectives of Veterinary Medicine and Natural Resources Management, Egypt*
- David Himelright (linguistics), *Natural Science, Virgin Islands*
- Julia Letoutchaia (zoology), *Historical Perspectives of Veterinary Medicine and Natural Resources Management, Egypt*

Spring Semester 2005

- Nathanael Brady (osteopathic medicine), *Medical Student International Health Elective Clerkship, Malawi*
- Paul Brown (social work), *Spanish Language, Literature and Culture, Cáceres, Spain*
- Maria Carmona (interdisciplinary studies in social science–international studies), *University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa*
- Christina Chen (marketing), *John Cabot University, Rome, Italy*
- Christopher German (political science), *People, Government, Justice System and Public Policies of Australia*
- Clare Jagenow (landscape architecture), *Landscape Architecture in Europe*
- Rachel Johnstone (advertising), *People, Government, Justice System and Public Policies of Australia*
- Joseph Ritter (English), *English Studies, University of Aarhus, Denmark*
- Kristie Timber (journalism), *Alma College program, Paris, France*

When fully funded three years from now, the MSUFCU Study Abroad Scholarship program will be able to award about 130 scholarships annually, ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000.



MSU students serving as U.S. Pavilion guides at the World EXPO in Japan on opening day with ISP Associate Dean Dawn Pysarchik (left); MSU alumnus Doug West, CEO of Aichi USA 2005, Inc. (center); and Jeffrey Johnson, resident director of the Japan Center for Michigan Universities in nearby Hikone, Japan. The students are (left to right) Joshua Friedman, Mathew Sherman, Robert Chinnery, Jamie Irving, Cynthia Chang, and Elmer Novis. Not pictured: Brian Forest. Doug West (center) graduated from MSU in 1967 with a B.A. in social science (pre-law) and later earned a law degree at the Detroit College of Law. He is on loan to Aichi USA 2005 from Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., where he is a senior vice president.

MSU Students Earn Credit at World EXPO 2005

The Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU), a consortium of Michigan's 15 public universities administered by MSU, is cooperating with Aichi USA 2005 World EXPO, Inc. to facilitate a unique study abroad opportunity for American students. Through the U.S. Pavilion Guide Program, the 30 participants are currently serving as guides at the 2005 World EXPO in Aichi, Japan. The program combines an intense academic experience that builds on the location and themes of EXO 2005 with the core elements of the U.S. Pavilion Guide Program—national service as the “face” of the American people to the thousands of U.S. Pavilion visitors and the experience of living and working in the international setting of the World EXPO.

During the fall 2004 semester, a national search was conducted to select 30 students to serve as program participants and volunteer guides. To be eligible, they needed to have at least a second-year fluency in Japanese. The following seven MSU

students, all from Michigan, were among the 30 selected:

- Cynthia Chang (Big Rapids), freshman international studies major
- Robert Chinnery (Laingsburg), junior Japanese and business major
- Brian Forest (Clinton Township), junior East Asian language and culture major
- Joshua Friedman (West Bloomfield), junior international relations and Japanese major
- Jamie Irving (Detroit), senior East Asian language and culture major
- Elmer Novis (Okemos), senior East Asian and culture major
- Mathew Sherman (Haslett), junior Japanese language major

The core of this academic program, which began in January 2005, was offered at JCMU in Hikone,

Shiga, Japan, and included intensive instruction in Japanese language and cultural skills and critical analysis of world fairs. Additional components of the academic program include an online course focusing on world fairs facilitated by MSU Associate Professor of Geography Mark Wilson and an internship offered in coordination with the U.S. Pavilion in Aichi, Japan. All credit for courses and internships is granted by MSU, JCMU's administrative agent.

The guides finished their training and orientation program at the Japan Center for Michigan Universities at the end of February and moved to Nagoya to prepare for the opening of EXPO.

The guides are responsible for the daily activities of the U.S. Pavilion. ISP Associate Dean Dawn Pysarchik, who oversees the administration of JCMU, was at the U.S. Pavilion on March 25, opening day of EXPO. "For me, this was the culmination of a six-month journey, involving JCMU's recruitment, selection, and training of the U.S. Pavilion guides," she said. "It was very rewarding to see the guides on the job, and exciting to witness the reactions of the Japanese visitors to the guides' excellent Japanese language skills." While most national pavilions have hired Japanese guides, Pysarchik emphasized that "the U.S. Pavilion has trained American guides with in-depth knowledge of the Japanese language and culture and of the displays in the pavilion, ranging from Benjamin Franklin's life and works to the moon landing and a prototype of a Mars Exploration Rover."

Other highlights include a pavilion tour led by a holographic image of Benjamin Franklin, a model of a single-tail Wright Brothers' glider, a hydrogen fuel-cell technology exhibit, and a collection of moccasins from all of the Native American nations of the U.S.

The following websites may be of further interest:

- JCMU website at www.isp.msu.edu/jcmu
- U.S. Pavilion guides and their activities at skygawoker.com/expo
- U.S. Pavilion site at www.uspavilion.com
- EXPO 2005 website in English at www.expo2005.or.jp/en/

—Jay Rodman and Martin Stack

Three student guides prepare to greet guests at the U.S. Pavilion on opening day of the 2005 World EXPO in Aichi, Japan. Seven of the 30 guides are MSU students, including Cynthia Chang (center).

Freshman Seminar Abroad in Japan

MSU is tapping into the energy surrounding the JCMU–World EXPO connection by launching a new Freshman Seminar Abroad in Hikone, Japan.

The program will allow incoming freshmen to learn about world fairs and Japanese popular culture from July 7–24, 2005. It provides students with a focused international experience and uses a structured group setting to explore this fascinating country and important cultural themes. Like other MSU Freshman Seminars Abroad, the program in Hikone is designed to help prepare incoming freshmen for the MSU college experience and further their understanding of global interconnectedness.

