

# Lamar University Office of Study Abroad NEWSLETTER

Summer 2016 Issue

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## Upcoming Events

### Indian Students

A group of 37 engineering students are visiting from India this summer.

**June 6 – July 14, 2016**

### Welcome Back Reception

Come and catch up with all of the students who studied abroad this year!

**September 8, 2016 at 4pm  
in the Library (6<sup>th</sup> floor)**

### Photo Contest

Submit up to five of your favorite photos from your study abroad experience for a chance to win a prize in three different categories:

- Best Overall Photo
- Best Selfie/Photo with you in it
- Office of Study Abroad Top Pick

**Deadline for submissions  
is September 22, 2016**

### Fall Study Abroad Fair

Come find out about all of our new and exciting 2016-2017 programs at our Fall Study Abroad Fair.

**October 11, 2016 from  
11am – 1pm on the  
Dining Hall Lawn**

**International  
Education Week  
November 14-18, 2016**

## Message from the Director's Perch

With Lamar University students traveling to 13 different countries in Summer 2016 alone, there is never a dull moment in the Office of Study Abroad! Summer is the point during the year when the fruits of our collective labor – faculty, staff, students, and parents included – blossom into unforgettable academic and cultural experiences. Our Cardinals are seeing the world, and sending us their pictures to prove it!

Needless to say, Brittney Crossley and I are very proud of what our students and faculty are doing this summer and felt it was the perfect time to create our inaugural Office of Study Abroad Newsletter. The newsletter will showcase the amazing international activities of Lamar University while also giving our students a space to put their study abroad experiences into their own words. Moreover, our Upcoming Events section will help returning study abroad students find out about new international programs and scholarships to investigate when they get back on campus.

The ultimate goal of the Office of Study Abroad is to create a two-way path of international interaction where we bring our Cardinals to the world and the world back here to Southeast Texas. We believe that by “embracing the unfamiliar” we learn to appreciate cultural differences while also breaking down barriers and misunderstandings. This cross-cultural dialogue is so important in this time of amazing interconnectivity yet also heightened distrust and miscommunication between cultures at home and abroad.

From my perch, the view I see is impressive. Study abroad has become an important and dynamic component of our academic programming, and opportunities for international engagement on our campus are increasing. Record numbers of our students and faculty are learning about people and places around the world and are returning to campus motivated to continue a path towards global citizenship. It's an exciting time to be an LU Cardinal. I can't wait to see where the journey takes us next.

*Jeff Palis*

Director, Global Studies and Study Abroad

# Program Spotlight

## Belize

### Winter 2017

Course: HNRS 4364 - Environmental Sustainability (3 credits)

Dates: January 7 – 15, 2017 (Class meetings during fall semester)

Program Fee: \$2,400 (includes airfare, transportation, insurance, meals, and excursions)

During this 9 day experience, students will study the challenges of a developing nation in sustaining biodiversity and essential services of tropical ecosystems. Here's what the program includes:

- 5 days of exploring neo-tropical habitats of the Maya Mountain pine ridge, rainforests, savanna, and lakes & rivers
- Visits to the Mayan ruins of Carocol
- 4 days of snorkeling the coral reef, seagrasses, and mangroves of Tobacco Caye
- Interactions with the people and cultures of Central America



## LU's Most Popular Destinations for 2015-2016

### United Kingdom

#1

### Italy

#2

### St. Lucia

#3

### Japan

#4

### Iceland

#5

### Ireland

#6

### Costa Rica

### México

### South Korea

#7 (Tie)

### Spain

#10

## Funding Study Abroad

Affording study abroad is something that most students struggle with, but there are a lot of great scholarship and funding opportunities available.

### Scholarships:

- Boren Scholarship
- Critical Language Scholarship
- DAAD German Scholarship
- Generation Study Abroad Scholarship
- Gilman Scholarship
- Freeman Awards for Asia
- Fulbright Program
- NSHSS Di Yerbury Award
- Phi Kappa Phi Scholarship

### Funding Ideas:

- GoFundMe.com
- Kickstarter.com
- Ask for donations from local businesses or organizations
- Bake sales and car washes
- Birthday or holiday gifts

For more scholarships see our website.

## Study Abroad by the Numbers 2015-2016

**182**

Undergraduate and Graduate Study Abroad Students

**3.28**

Average GPA of Study Abroad Students

**250%**

Increase in Study Abroad Students since 2014

**17**

Short-Term Faculty-Led Programs

**4**

Bilateral Student Exchange Agreements



# Journey of the Mind

By Brittney Crossley

In the Spring 2016 semester, Lamar University hosted a group of students and faculty from the Tainan University of Technology (TUT) Department of Dance. The sixteen students and four faculty spent almost two weeks living on campus and attending classes with Lamar University dance students.

The Taiwanese students performed with LU dance students in the *Dance Unleashed: Spring Dance Concert* (April 29 – May 1). The dance concert featured ballet, hip hop, modern, tap, and contemporary dance styles with original works choreographed by LU and TUT faculty.

The Taiwanese students also performed in their very own showcase, *Journey of the Mind*, on May 3, 2016. This outstanding performance took the audience through several unique dances with themes relating to nature. The free performance had a nearly packed theatre with many people from the Beaumont community in attendance.

The cultural exchange between TUT and LU students also took place off-campus during a number of activities including an afternoon of bowling, a boat cruise on the Neches River, and an Astros baseball game. Although the Taiwanese students and faculty were only at Lamar University for a short time, both sides came away from the experience with lasting friendships. One of the Taiwanese students, Lin I-Chun, said that her favorite part of the experience was meeting the American students, including students who studied abroad in Taiwan in 2015. LU dance student Kimberly Ramsey enjoyed getting to know her Taiwanese peers and has kept in touch with her new friends noting “they are still teaching me their language and sending beautiful pictures of Taiwan and their school.” She hopes to visit them next year as part of an LU study abroad program to Taiwan.

The project would not have been possible without amazing support at LU from Golden Wright and the Department of Theatre and Dance, Dr. William Harn, the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, and the Office of Residence Life. Xièxie!



Top & Left: TUT dance students during and after performances of *Journey of the Mind*.

Below: Taiwanese & Lamar students taking part in a fan dance class.



Left: TUT students and faculty went bowling with several Lamar students and faculty.



Below: Ballet class for TUT and LU students taught by Latvian guest instructor Jurijs Safonovs.



Bottom: TUT students and faculty enjoy a Neches River cruise.







## Costa Rica & Panama

LU College of Business students participated in a Spring Break 2016 program in Costa Rica and Panama led by Frank Badua and Jeff Palis. While visiting Central America for a week in March, Kay-Alana Turner (pictured center above) and her fellow Global Cardinals visited a coffee plantation, a family-owned manufacturing business, DHL Offices (above left), and the Panama Canal (above right). Kay-Alana plans to pursue a career in international business development, focusing on ecotourism. One of the things she enjoyed the most about her program was learning about the project management of the Panama Canal Expansion, "It was amazing to explore the planning and execution of the multibillion dollar project and then get to see the new locks in person."

## Seoul, South Korea

Kirby Clayton, a junior studying mechanical engineering at LU, spent her Spring 2016 semester as an exchange student at our partner institution, Seoul National University of Science and Technology, in Seoul, South Korea. When asked about her experience in South Korea so far, she stated, "There is something so rewarding about living in a foreign country and learning and becoming accustom[ed] to their culture. It has been absolutely amazing and I would recommend it to literally any Lamar student – regardless of classification or major."



Above and right Kirby Clayton is photographed at Gyeongbokgung Palace, in central Seoul, wearing Korean traditional clothing called the Hanbok.

# Cardinals Studying Abroad Around the World

## Rennes, France

Our first student to spend a semester studying in Rennes, France, at the ESC Rennes School of Business, was LU senior Management major, Danny Grigsby. Danny was able to experience French life and culture and he learned a lot both in and outside of the classroom. In addition to his coursework in international business, he was also able to meet other students from all over the world and he said that "becoming friends with them was so life changing and showed me that we are all the same no matter where we're from."



Above: Danny relaxes on the Azores Islands off the coast of Portugal during spring break.

Left: Danny takes a stroll in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris.



# Connections in Latin America

By Kay-Alana Turner

Beside the crystal blue lagoon at Poas Volcano National Park in Costa Rica, two women stopped my friend to talk. They had noticed our group's Lamar University gear. As Lamar University graduates themselves, they were excited to connect with students from their alma mater. We explained that we were visiting the park due to our participation in a business study abroad program to Costa Rica and Panama.

During my time in both Latin American countries, I consumed fresh, juicy fruits, soaked up plenty of sunshine, and shopped the crafts markets in Old Town Panama City. I stayed with a Costa Rican family that treated me like their own daughter. I stood so close to an active volcano that the scent of sulfur tickled my nose and waved at the crew of an enormous cargo ship passing through the Panama Canal.



I also learned about some unique attributes of Latin American business. For example, unlike the common impersonal business approach of the United States, Costa Ricans and Panamanians prefer to base business interactions and decisions around family. I also realized that the key economic drivers in the countries are different. In Costa Rica, much of the country's revenue comes from coffee and tourism. In Panama, the Panama Canal is the center of business and trade.



Gazing at the lagoon and talking with two alumni, our group shared about all of these things we were learning during the program. We connected with them over both our love for Lamar University and the shared understanding of global travelers. Since returning from the trip, each of us have reaped the benefits of education abroad, including communication skills, adaptability, and a more informed global outlook. These benefits will serve each of us as we venture into our future careers.

When I think about Costa Rica and Panama, I remember meeting two Lamar University graduates in a national park in the middle of Latin America. This encounter showed me and our group that Lamar University has been and, through study abroad, grows each day into a launchpad for lifelong international exploration and discovery.



Photos from top to bottom: a traditional "casado" lunch in Costa Rica; the view from the control tower above the Panama Canal; LU students and faculty with Lamar alumni they met at Costa Rica's Parque Nacional Volcán Poás.

## Office of Study Abroad

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## Become a Cardinal Beyond Borders!

Do you want to meet people from around the world, add something interesting to your resume, and help someone new to the area learn about the local culture? Then join the *Cardinals Beyond Borders!* Program.

This new buddy program between the Office of Study Abroad and Texas Intensive English Program aims to bring international students together with LU students. There will be a variety of fun and educational activities to take part in throughout the Fall semester. Contact Brittney for more information!

## Want to submit an article or photo for our Fall 2016 issue?

Email submissions to [studyabroad@lamar.edu](mailto:studyabroad@lamar.edu)

## Find us on:



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