



# Bods Abroad

Published by the Office of International Programs

September 2011

## Inside:

City of Lights	pg. 1
Seize Every Opportunity to Discover	pg. 2
Carnaval	pg. 3
Dominican Lifestyle	pg. 4
Homesick	pg. 5
A French Connection	pg. 6

## City of Light

By Mercedes Garcia Reyes

International Media Seminar - Spring Break 11'

## Paris, France

What an experience it was to have been in one of the most fashionable cities in the world. During spring break of 2011, I got the magnificent opportunity to travel with some of my classmates and instructors to the City of Light.

My week long trip to Paris was extraordinary. From the time I got to the airport I was already nervous but at the same time filled with curiosity for what awaited me. What will the place I've only heard about and seen in pictures look like? What will the food taste like? Will I understand some of the language the natives will be speaking since I know Spanish (and Spanish is a little bit similar to French)? I knew only the answer to the last question, and that would be a no. I would not understand any of what they would say because I didn't speak French. Despite the language barrier I got along just fine at the Paris airport. When we made it to our hotel we checked in and immediately headed out to explore. What a sight it was to see the Eiffel Tower in person! There were street vendors constantly approaching us and some of them just kept saying "Lady Gaga". We never did find out why they kept saying that.

The purpose for our trip was to attend a Mass Media Seminar. We got to meet some famous media people from France, and got to go into their houses and see a little bit of how people live in France. Also we learned about their stories and about how they got into the media world. We usually spent all morning long in the classroom, and then we had free time to ourselves.



Mercedes Garcia in the "City of Lights" Paris, France.

Photo submitted by Mercedes Garcia Reyes

We got to eat some traditional French cheeses with bread and drank a little bit of wine. They were all very tasty. I made a really good friend on my trip and she and I decided to go exploring around Paris by ourselves and it was a very cool experience. Thankfully we didn't get lost. Along with our group we went to several other places like the Notre Dame Cathedral and Sacré-Coeur Basilica. The view from the Basilica was so breath taking, as was the view from atop the Eiffel Tower. It was really neat going around exploring the city. With the help of a map of the city and the subway you could go almost anywhere. I was amazed at how many people were walking in the streets. I only get to see that when I go to Mexico. I really liked the fact that they use much of their public transportation, because that means less carbon dioxide in the air and less pollution. They also had rentable bikes at different spots, which I thought was really efficient because you could rent one and ride it for as long as you wanted and then return it to one of the bike stations for someone else to use.

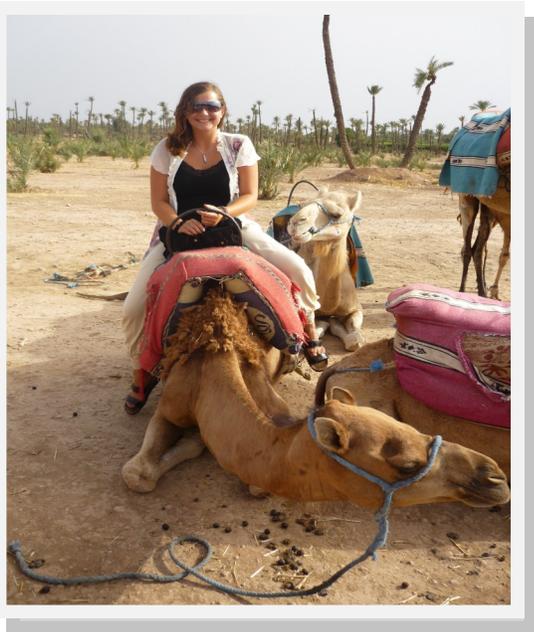
Visit the Office of International Programs to learn more about Study Abroad opportunities: [www.washburn.edu/iip](http://www.washburn.edu/iip)

## Seize Every Opportunity to Discover

by Korissa Gillespie

Semester at Sea—Summer 11'

Multiple Countries



**Camel-up, Korissa on an excursion in Morocco.**

Photo submitted by Korissa Gillespie

I decided to participate in a study abroad program because I wanted to see the world. I wanted to acquire a new perspective on the different cultures, environments, and all the people coexisting in it. I wanted the opportunity to become more mature in my views of cultures other than my own, and I needed to develop an understanding of all the commonalities and differences in these diverse civilizations. Semester at Sea gave me all of this and so much more! I traveled the world on a ship through Semester at Sea in the summer of 2011. From the second I boarded the MV Explorer for the first time in the Bahamas I knew this trip was going to be amazing, but I had no idea that in store for me was a life changing journey! Over the course of one summer the MV Explorer sailed across the Atlantic to Spain, Italy, Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Morocco, and then eventually returned to the USA. On the ship I took nine credit hours of classes that included Marine Biology, Botany, and Global Studies. My classes were formatted to revolve around the countries that we visited, and in each port we were led on unforgettable adventures in places that most students only get to read about in their textbooks! These classes gave me a foundation of knowledge about the places we were visiting, so that when we arrived I had inspiration about what sights and traditions I would treasure most. In Spain I walked through the grand works of Antonio Gaudi and marveled at all the beautiful styles of his architecture. I would never trade that feeling of astonishment I was overwhelmed with when I walked through the Colos-

seum for the first time in Rome, Italy. Greece gave me a whole new perspective on traditions, and on the true meanings behind Greek mythology. Croatia was extraordinarily beautiful and it gave me a new outlook and admiration for the natural world. I faced my fears in Bulgaria and somehow managed to bond with my friends in some new and inspiring ways. Turkey gave me a wonderful feeling of internal peace and insight into the Islamic beliefs and traditions. Morocco made me realize how different cultures are and that I have to learn from them with an open mind. The MV Explorer gave me a ship that became my home, where I met hundreds of strangers who became my family. I found out that learning about the world helped me to discover more about myself than I could have ever imagined possible. I left home as who I thought I was, and returned as who I am. I found strength and confidence in myself that I have never felt before and with that I learned that even as an individual person I have the power to make a difference in the world. I learned that these diverse cultures have more similarities than differences, and every place I ventured to helped me to understand that no matter where you go people are inspiring. I learned that if you give people the chance they can become your best friends and you may even consider them family, no matter their geographical location, their religion, or their heritage. I learned that no matter who you are, or where you come from, if you look at the world with open eyes, a closed mouth, and open ears there is so much you can learn from everything around you! I highly recommend this program to students. I think that all of the opportunities offered here are extremely valuable and provide students with a better perspective not only on foreign countries, but on the USA and within themselves. I think that all students should invest themselves in a program such as Semester at Sea because it provides key knowledge and understanding of the world we live in. That knowledge is a huge part of being a global citizen. There are so many opportunities for growth and development offered here, and they are all just waiting to be taken advantage of. If you take the time to invest yourself in this program you will never regret it. I promise you will never forget it!



**When in Rome...Thank the people who helped you get there.**

Photo submitted by Korissa Gillespie

## Carnaval

by Darris Hawks

Zuyd University—Spring Semester 11'

Netherlands



**A group dressed up enjoying the Carnaval celebration.**

Photo submitted by Darris Hawks

I studied in Maastricht, the Netherlands for a semester, and I had the time of my life during Carnaval. Carnaval is Halloween on steroids. These people are diligent. Large groups of people would coordinate costumes to make a better total image. At least one group brought a bed.

The people of Maastricht wore their costumes as nonchalantly as I wear a t-shirt to the gas station. A statue in the city center was covered in vegetables and city officials poured out the government building singing, dancing, being dressed ridiculously, and of course, drinking. A parade took place on our side of the Maas River and it consisted of pretty much whoever chose to jump in line. Ostrich people, the apparent full cast of Star Wars, a homeless man in the back of a truck, a 15 foot tall papier-mâché of what appeared to be a lord with lock-jaw, and a dignified man in a Hello Kitty costume, to name a few.



**A Carnaval participant in a Hello Kitty Costume.**

Photo submitted by Darris Hawks



**Darris in an admiral costume for Carnaval.**

Photo submitted by Darris Hawks

I chose to be an admiral, but I would have been a king, but the king robes in the many makeshift shops that capitalized on the holiday were exorbitantly over what I was willing to pay since I wouldn't be able to wear the same costume next year. Anyway, the festivities would mount to a climax just as soon as the pesky sun went away.

The pounding of the drums filled the streets- every once in a while you'd hear an instructor's whistle. Where did they come from? Simple, everyone in the Netherlands is either a musician or a seamstress; fact. They used their skills to spontaneously assemble and start playing for wandering crowds.

People were dancing, flashing lights, and as if to make those seem terribly small by comparison, drinking a *lot* of beer. It's a very beer-centric culture. I think the bars must have had a glass sharing policy, because if you think you're getting all of your glasses back at the end of the night, you probably aren't from Maastricht. All of the pubs were serving outside and, in an attempt to retain a good percentage of glass retrieval; they built trays throughout the city on which you could place your glass rather than throwing it away.

However, the Dutch are a very practical people. Why put your glass on the trays when there's a perfectly good windowsill right here or a pole with a slightly flat top over there?

When I get back to the Netherlands, and I *will* get back, I hope it's in time for the Carnaval. I sincerely recommend that everybody study abroad at least once. They might have their own Carnaval.

## Doulos Discovery School

By Stefanie Stuever

Art Internship—Spring 11'

Dominican Republic



Thanks to the Washburn Art Department and International Programs, last spring I had the opportunity to study abroad in the Dominican Republic. I completed an art internship at Doulos Discovery School.

The Dominican Republic is a giant mixture of colors and cultures: African, Spanish, American, French, Creole, Native American and more. Dominican language is loud, fast Spanish and incorporates a lot of slang. "Que lo que" is a slang term for "what's up" and common in Dominican conversation. Streets are lined with bright colored houses. Comodos serve as small corner stores with basic groceries. Dominos are played after dinners of sancocho.

Doulos Discovery School is a private Christian school in the mountain town of Jarabacoa, right in the middle of the country. Private schools are abundant in the Dominican Republic but are costly and therefore only largely available to the wealthy. The public education system is lacking nationwide, which keeps the country's poor trapped in cycle of poverty. Doulos maintains that leaders come from all economic backgrounds. To help bridge the economic gap Doulos provides need-based scholarships to half its students. This creates a unique learning environment where students from varying economic backgrounds work together and gain new perspectives. Doulos' mission statement is to "equip and educate servant leaders through Christian discipleship and expeditionary learning to impact the Dominican Republic."



**A child's artwork at Doulos Discovery School.**

Photo submitted by Stefanie Stuever

I began my art-focused internship in January of 2011 and returned home in April of 2011. During my time at Doulos, I assisted the art teacher, Kerrie Schoen, in planning, preparing, and teaching art to 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. My art internship at Doulos gave me the opportunity to teach art to a wide range of ages. I am grateful for this teaching experience, as it adds to the depth and of my pending Bachelor of Fine Arts from Washburn.

My extended time in the Dominican allowed me to not only to observe and learn about the culture but, to literally be absorbed into the community. I lived in a homestay, with a grandmother and her granddaughter, and was welcomed into their family with open arms. The teachers and staff at Doulos, many of whom are Americans, helped me adjust to cultural differences. For me, the greatest challenge was the language barrier. With only one Spanish class under my belt from several years ago, I was forced to learn quickly how to communicate. The community of Jarabacoa, everyone from the motorcycle taxi drivers to the farmers at the vegetable market, showed incredible patience with this "gringa." My internship at Doulos and the experience of living abroad in the Dominican were life changing because I was immersed in Dominican culture and gained perspective and independence.



**A young student holding the Dominican Republic Flag**

Photo submitted by Stefanie Stuever

## 2011 Photo Essay Contest

**First Place: Homesick, NUI Maynooth**

**A Poem by : Tess Wilson**

*Dedicated to the Hargadon lads*

“Hurry, or we’ll miss your flight!”

My mother said, one August night.

I’d had all summer long to pack  
and four whole months ‘till I’d be back  
for just a week (for Christmas Break)  
then gone again (exams to take).

So, sprinting to the airport gate –  
tugging luggage, almost late –  
my mind could not quite wrap around  
that I would be on foreign ground  
in just ten hours, or, to be fair,  
twelve, with one stop in O’Hare.

I kissed my mom and waved goodbye  
while waiting in the x-ray line,  
then found my seat and stowed my bag  
and opened up the Sky Mall mag.  
And after reading, front-to-back,  
this treasure trove of tasteless tack,  
I thought I’d better take a nap  
and fell asleep in half a snap.

Upon arrival on the Isle,  
I freaked out for a little while.  
I realized, suddenly, that I  
was now in Ireland. And my  
mom and dad and dog were not.  
I guess I’d never really thought  
about how hard this year might be,  
with no one here I knew but me.

But after a great taxi ride,  
and after I sat down and cried,  
I vowed that I would not allow  
my homesick heart to bring me down.  
I unpacked all my shoes and clothes,  
blotted my eyes and wiped my nose,  
and found I couldn’t wait to meet  
the people living in my suite.

The months went by much, much too fast

and, yet, it felt like years had passed.

My silver friends had turned to gold  
and drinks were had and jokes were told.

I spent a week with Dan and Col  
and learned to throw a rugby ball.

Edel and I had coffee talks  
and movie nights and grocery walks.

And I don’t think that, if I tried,  
I could count the eggs I fried  
at breakfast time in our apartment  
(bacon was the boys’ department).

We watched the matches at Croke Park,  
climbed up to see Dublin after dark,  
sat on cliffs and watched the sea,  
and Dan sang Irish songs to me.

The little things one might dismiss  
are all the things I find I miss.

When I came back from overseas,  
I thought that I’d adjust with ease.

(And please don’t take this the wrong way,  
‘cause I don’t think it every day)

But I still catch myself regretting  
coming back, almost forgetting  
I have family, friends and pup

I love too much to just give up!

When I got on my state-bound plane,  
something I cannot explain  
happened to my homesick heart.

It broke in two and there’s one part  
that never really left Maynooth.

So, I’ll be back. If you need proof,

the jar that’s labeled “Irish Trip,” is almost full of change and tips.



**Tess Wilson (front) Enjoying the view from a cliff on the Aran Islands.**

Photo submitted by Tess Wilson

**A Washburn's Student's French Connection**  
**An excerpt from the American Institute for Foreign**  
**Study Newsletter by Megan Hash—Summer 11'**  
**Jordan Ward—Paris, France**

A Washburn student's only regret when studying in Paris this summer was that she did not have more time. Jordan Ward, senior in music, studied abroad for five weeks during the summer.

Ward chose to study abroad with the American Institute for Foreign Study because she liked that their program was focused on French culture.

"I've always wanted to study abroad," said Ward. "I've always wanted to learn a different language. It's really amazing how fast you learn a language when you are totally immersed in a culture."

During her trip, Ward visited Normandy and other World War II sights and memorials. She also visited Mont Saint-Michel tidal island and the Saint-Michel monastery. She spent a weekend visiting castles and another weekend in London.

Ward traveled with 71 students from all across the United States, including two from Kansas.

"It was a culture shock just getting to know the others from the United States," said Ward. "You don't realize how different the U.S. is. I got to meet lots of amazing people and make new friends. It was amazing how well we jelled."

Another memorable moment for Ward was the chance to visit Frederic Chopin's grave in the Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris.

"I only had an hour and a half to visit the cemetery and it has over 100,000 graves, said Ward." I didn't realize how big it was and I was running around trying to find Chopin's grave. It was beautiful, all white and I wanted to hug it."

Ward took several classes in Paris including an art history class, a conversation class, a grammar class and a wine appreciation class. All of her classes were taught in French. During her art history class, they visited many famous sights and she even had one class in front of Notre Dame.

"My advice to someone that is going to study abroad would be to get over the fact that you are going to sound like an idiot at first," said Ward. "But you will get better."

Ward and some of her fellow classmates befriended a server at a restaurant they frequented. The server was trying to work on his English so they all benefited from the friendship. Ward said she learned a lot about their new friend and the experience helped her understand his culture. It also showed her the differences between the French and U.S. cultures.

"One guy told me that the American accent was cute," said

Ward. "Another told me that when we start a sentence we start really slow then we speed up. It's crazy that we don't think about it, but we do, do that"

Another favorite memory for Ward was when she visited the Eiffel Tower during La Fête Nationale, France's Independence Day.

"They lit fireworks behind the Eiffel Tower and there was a concert and everyone was singing," said Ward.

More than one million people attended this celebration and the metros were shut down. Ward was surprised by how calm the people were as they walked home after the celebration.

"Nobody was pushing or shoving," said Ward. They are so laid back. I wasn't expecting that in such a large city," said Ward. "Everywhere they go, they don't move quickly."

Ward said she benefitted a lot from traveling abroad and she now has friends from all over the U.S. and the world.

"I think everyone should study abroad," said Ward. "Now is the time. You may never get a chance to do that again. It really is an eye opening experience to learn about other cultures. It is the most magical experience. I would give anything to go back."



**Jordan Ward showing off the Eiffel Tower.**

Photo submitted by Jordan Ward

**Visit the Office of International Programs to learn more:**  
**[www.washburn.edu/iip](http://www.washburn.edu/iip)**