

International ACCENTS

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Faculty International Activity Report

College of Arts & Sciences

Associate Professor **Ye Wang** (Art) was invited to give lectures on Washburn art teaching and art faculty work at Southwest Jiaotong University's Art Department on December 27, 2013, Xihua University's Art Department on December 30, 2013, as well as at Mianyang Normal College's Art Department on December 31, 2013. The first two universities are located in Chengdu, Sichuan, China. The third one is located in Mianyang, 83 miles north from Chengdu.

Roy Wohl (Kinesiology) made a presentation titled "Health Outcomes and Fitness Measures in Youth in a Rural School District in Kansas" at the *Fifth Annual International Conference on the Health Risks of Youth* in Nassau, Bahamas from January 1-4, 2014.

Dr. Judith McConnell-Farmer (Education) As International Conference Director she attended *The Oxford Round Table: Education*. Brasnose College, Oxford University. Oxford, UK. August 4-8, 2013. Twenty participants from the USA represented eight states for this five-day conference. Thirteen papers and reflective discussions were presented at *The Oxford Round Table*. The focus of *The Oxford Round Table* was on the topic of research, issues and trends in education. This is the 30TH *Oxford Round Table* that Dr. McConnell-Farmer has coordinated at Oxford University. She also presented the following papers:

"A Wish for My Grandson: The Essence of Education." *The Oxford Round Table: Education*. Brasnose College, Oxford University. Oxford, UK. August 8, 2013.

"The Changing Face of Education." *The Oxford Round Table: Education*. Brasnose College, Oxford University. Oxford, UK. August 5, 2013.

From December 28, 2013-January 10, 2014, Dr. McConnell-Farmer led 19 WU participants in the

Study Abroad in Belize program where they tutored children and volunteered in three public and one private orphanages in Belize. They taught for two mornings in an island school, Caye Caulker Roman Catholic School, in Caye Caulker, Belize. They attended and presented posters at the poster sessions in Belize City and at the University of Belize as part of the *Belizean International Symposium in Education*, a four-day conference for international educators. Dr. McConnell-Farmer personally presented the following papers: 1.) "A Passage through India and Nepal: From the Gathering of Street Children to a School in the Himalayas". *The Belizean International Symposium on Education*. The University of Belize, Belmopan, Belize, Central America. January 3, 2014; and, 2.) "Lewis Carroll's "Alice": A Legacy from Oxford, England". *The Belizean International Symposium on Education*. Belize City, Belize, Central America. January 2, 2014.

The study abroad program was held in Belize City, Ladyville, Belmopan and Caye Caulker, Belize, Central America. The program donated more than 1,000 pounds of clothing, shoes and school supplies to the orphanages and the school in Caye Caulker.

Dr. McConnell-Farmer currently serves as Vice President (2011-current) for *OMEP-USA (Organisation Mondiale pour L'Education Prescolaire)*, World Organization for Early Childhood Education and Care, United States North Continent (Nationally elected office), as well as several committees:

Faculty Member. *The Oxford Round Table*. Oxford University. Oxford, UK. Faculty

Member. *The People to People International Program*, Spokane, WA.

International Member. Symposium Programme Committee Adviser. *The Belizean International Symposium on Education*. Belize City, Belize, Central America.

Oversees Program Advisor, Board Member. *The Association for Childhood Education Practitioners*, Nigeria (ACEP). Nigeria, Africa.



Member. International Planning Committee for the 2015 OMEP-World (*Organisation Mondiale pour L'Education Prescolaire*) Conference to be held in Washington D.C.

Advisory Board Member. *The Forum, Journal of the Oxford Round Table*. Harris Manchester College, Oxford University. Oxford, UK.

School of Applied Studies

In September of 2013 **Dr. Bassima Schbley** (Social Work) presented the results of her research during a Summer Sweet Sabbatical at a Brown Bag Luncheon held at the International House in September of 2013. This original research focused on developing an understanding of Muslim Lebanese women toward the practice of polygamy. She also discussed her visit to the Lebanese Association of SOS Children's Villages, in Baalbak, Lebanon.

Dr. Schbley's Sweet Sabbatical Research during the summer of 2013 has also led to the recent approval (Dec.16, 2013) by the Andrews University Institutional Review Board for her to conduct research with Dr. Lori Walton on the following research study (which has recently begun): "Qualitative Analysis of Female Attitudes Towards Polygamy and Perceived Health Related Quality of Life in Muslim Lebanese and Kuwaiti Women."

Dr. Schbley, in the Fall of 2013, offered the following course (cross-listed for both undergraduate and graduate level students) for the first time in the history of ourWU's Dept of Social Work: "International Social Work." This course attracted a large number of students and is dealing with topics such as: migration, refugees, human rights issues, natural disaster, terrorism, and other related issues.

During the Fall of 2013, Dr. Schbley and Dr. Walton continued their ongoing research related to specific socio-economic barriers to maternal health faced by Bangladeshi women. The results of this research will be presented on February 4, 2014 at the Combined Sessions Meetings of the American Physical Therapy Association.

Dean's / Area Report

School of Business Russell E. Smith, Associate Dean

Partner Visits: In August 2013, the School of Business was pleased to host faculty and staff visitors from partner schools in Europe: the HEC-ULg Management School at the University of Liege in Liege, Belgium (a Magellan Exchange partner) and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at the Lower Danube University in Galati, Romania. The School also hosted visiting scholar Jing Wang from the Wuhan University of Science and Technology School of Management in China for three months from mid-September through mid-December.

University of Liege: In August 2013, Ms. Muriel Bequet, officer in the international relations department at the HEC-ULg, visited Washburn on a customized staff training assignment. During her three-week program, she spent two weeks participating in the peak-load, beginning-of-semester activities of Washburn's Office of International Programs followed by one week in the School of Business where she met with faculty, staff, and administration on curriculum coordination and student advising issues and visited classes to promote the study abroad experience. During her assignment she was also able to visit Magellan partners at Southeast Missouri State University and Missouri State University, as well as the Magellan Exchange headquarters in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

She reports that, "Staff training was very instructive and gave me a better insight into American college education and organization, which are rather different than ours" and noted "more openness on the American side with credits granted to general education and to personal development courses (sport, theater, music) but less specialized courses (niche courses)." She also pointed out that European institutions are placing more focus on the major discipline over the five years, with a great diversity of advanced courses, while paying less attention to soft



skills that may also be highly valuable on the job market. Another difference is that public education in Europe is not as expensive as in the US while the US system offers a large range of services and access to very modern infrastructure. In addition, US students are seen as ‘customers’ and are very much taken care of by the university staff. She concludes: “Finally, there is a very strong sense of community and a strong institutional pride among US students that no one will fail to see.”

Ms. Bequet’s visit follows a history of over ten years of “good connections and collaboration between our two institutions in terms of student mobility (both in semester exchanges and short programs).” She notes “that among some 20 partners in the Magellan network, we chose Washburn for its academic recognition and professionalism (recognized by AACSB).” Information about study abroad opportunities at HEC University of Liege and other information can be found at:

<http://www.hec.ulg.ac.be/en/students/international-student/exchange-student>

<http://www.hec.ulg.ac.be/application4mobiles>

Lower Danube University: Dean Edit Lukacs and Professor Daniela Sharpe from the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Lower Danube University in Galati, Romania (LDUG), visited the Washburn School of Business from Saturday, August 18 to Thursday, August 22, 2013. Following up on a visit to Washburn a year ago in August 2012 by Dr. Anca Gata, LDUG’s Vice President for International Relations, Dean Lukacs and Professor Sharpe visited the School of Business to strengthen the relationship and to discuss new areas of collaboration under the existing agreement, with the most likely prospects being in the MBA area of the two schools, including teaching, student recruiting, and joint research. Aside from attending class and meetings with School of Business faculty and administration, the visitors met with Vice President for Academic Affairs Randy Pembrook, Office of International Programs Director Baili Zhang, and Professor Frank Chorba of the Mass Media Department. Dr. Michael Stoica, Distinguished Professor of Business,

traveled to Lower Danube University in September to sit as an outside member on several faculty promotion examination boards for the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

Wuhan University of Science and Technology (WUST): This fall the School of Business hosted Professor Jing Wang as its ninth visiting scholar from the Wuhan University of Science and Technology (WUST) and the eighth from its School of Management. She holds a Ph.D. in Management Science and Engineering from Wuhan University of Technology and has been Professor in the Department of Business Administration at WUST since 2004 and Deputy Director of the Higher Education Research Institute at WUST, also since 2004. While at Washburn, she advanced her research program in supply chain management, studied pedagogy through regular attendance and participation in management classes, and worked on her English proficiency. In support of the partnership between the WUST School of Management and the WU School of Business, she met regularly with Associate Dean Russ Smith to analyze how supply chain thinking could be applied to Washburn’s support processes for the enrollment of international exchange and degree-seeking students, such enrollment being important exports of the state of Kansas.

Celal Bayar University: Ongoing in-person and Skype conversations about long-term collaboration with Celal Bayar University in Manisa, Turkey, near Izmir, led last semester to the signing of a first-level Agreement of Cooperation between the two universities (by Washburn on December 7, 2013 and by Celal Bayar University on January 3, 2014). Although general and campus-wide, this agreement is seen as the first step in building a record to support an application for the partnership to participate in the Mevlana Exchange Program, Turkey’s new exchange program for faculty and students. A fully developed Mevlana Exchange Program will include both student exchange and faculty development activities and participation of many departments across both campuses.

Curriculum Development and Pedagogy:

The new BU 356 Cross-Cultural Management course was offered for the first and second times this fall and spring by Dr. Liviu Florea, Associate Professor of Management. Developed to be part of the proposed major in international business, BU 356 includes an Internet-supported experiential exercise called “X-Culture,” which is played by student virtual teams of about seven members from universities in as many as seven countries across many time zones and who with rare exceptions never meet in person. The virtual student teams work together by e-mailing, videoconferencing, blogging, tweeting or crowdsourcing, using Facebook, Skype, Google Docs, Dropbox, Google+, WhatsApp, Google Translate, and other collaborative platforms. The final goal is to produce business plans on challenges presented by X-Culture’s business partners or on business initiatives of their own choosing. The companies are assigned and the competition is coordinated from the X-Culture headquarters.

According to Dr. Florea, “X-Culture is more than a simple business plan. It is an experiential exercise and a global virtual team project focused on creating a business plan. Our students are required to work in teams, with teammates from all over the world and from different cultures. Most often, they design a product for a new market.” Overall, “X-Culture benefits students by enhancing their cultural intelligence, international and virtual collaboration competencies, global self-efficacy, and increasing interest in cross-cultural interactions. It also expands their professional networks to include students, professionals, and managers with similar interests.” BU 356 is the second School of Business class with a significant Internet-supported student virtual team component; the first is BU 406 International Business and Entrepreneurial Experience: China, as offered by Dr. Michael Stoica, now in its eighth year. For more information about X-Culture, see <http://www.x-culture.org/>

BU 356 is one of two courses developed as part of the proposed international business major area of concentration in the Bachelor of Business Administration degree. The international major proposal itself continues to work its way through the Univer-

sity’s review processes. On December 3, 2103 the proposal was reviewed and approved by the Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate and then sent on to the full Faculty Senate where it was reviewed and approved by the full Faculty Senate on February 10, 2014. Pending review and approval by the General Faculty and the Washburn Board of Regents, we expect to be able to grant the international business major within the BBA in May 2015.

Student Mobility: Fall semesters are the big semesters for arriving international exchange and degree-seeking students. Fall 2013 saw the arrival of 24 undergraduate business exchange students who in most cases will study at Washburn for one or two semesters. Six exchange students were from Europe, including four from Fachhochschule Osnabrueck in Germany, one from Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences in Finland, and one from Magellan partner University of Liege in Belgium. Eighteen students were from greater China, including nine from bilateral partnership school Wuhan University of Science and Technology; four of the students from WUST are expected to continue at Washburn as BBA degree-seeking students for another two years. Three International students, Rizki Aljupri from Indonesia, Sijan Mainali from Nepal, and Zhiren (Ken) Quan from China, were granted their MBA degrees in Fall 2013.

Fall 2013 MBA graduate Rizki Aljupri is running for an Indonesian Senate seat in the district of Jakarta and is using social media for campaigning and fund raising. According to a presentation developed for an MBA class, he is styling the campaign after the use of social media in Barack Obama’s 2008 & 2012 presidential campaigns.

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of International Programs

Websites:

<http://washburn.edu/ip>
<http://washburn.studioabroad.com>



School of Nursing

Louisa Schurig, Student Advisor

We have seven students participating in the TransAtlantic Double Degree program this year. Four students are currently studying at the University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary, and three students are studying at Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Savonlinna, Finland. These students will earn two baccalaureate degrees as a result of this program. We had four students complete a four week exchange at Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Savonlinna, Finland, in Community and Public Health.

We will have nursing students who will be traveling to Nicaragua over spring break 2014 and will be exploring nursing. Particular emphasis will be on maternal, infant, and pediatric healthcare.

In March, WU School of Nursing will host 10 students from Fukuoka University, Japan for two weeks. These students will be observing clinicals and overall health delivery systems in the U.S.

As part of our TADD faculty exchange, we will host faculty from Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Savonlinna, Finland, and we will send faculty to the University of Szeged, Hungary.

We will host faculty from Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences, Finland; Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Finland; and University of the West of Scotland, Scotland as part of our Benchmarking Study. This grant study which seeks to benchmark and compare quality management systems used for evaluation of learning outcomes in Finland, Scotland and Kansas at the university level and then at the nursing program level.

In early summer, there will be a final meeting/celebration at Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, Savonlinna, Finland, of the TransAtlantic Double Degree (TADD).

From the Desk of ...

Kelly McClendon

Lecturer/Coordinator, Intensive English Program

So, here I am again at the time of this newsletter reporting the largest fall enrollment in the IE Program: 117 students! If you've been watching this little corner of the *Accent*, you will have noticed that this has increased from 65 in the fall of 2011. In addition, we have had a more diverse group of students this time with some Japanese, Spanish, German, Chinese, Saudi Arabian, Paraguayan, Senegalese, Iranian, and more.

I would like to welcome a few new faces to our IE faculty. They are Mike Culp, Elizabeth Lenherr, and Amy Quirin, each contributing to our enthusiastic teaching team which now includes nine.

I want to mention an exciting course we are offering. Language in Context Seminar rounds out the degree-seeking students' schedule by providing opportunities for these students to learn about and adjust to US college life by having them interview WU professors and staff, getting them involved in community volunteer work, and showing them around local businesses and high schools. Watch for these students on campus in the future.

Heidi Staerker

Coordinator of International Student Services

In August, 120 new and transfer international students began their studies at Washburn. Again this Fall, our two largest student groups were from China and Saudi Arabia, and we also welcomed students from Japan, Venezuela, Spain, Russia and Thailand, among several other countries.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate our nine Fall 2013 graduates:

- **Shuyue Chen** (China) BA in Communications
- **Tyson Nernberg** (Canada) BBA in Economics and Finance

- **Anqi Zhang** (China) BBA in Accounting
- **Rizki Aljupri** (Indonesia) MBA
- **Sijan Mainali** (Nepal) MBA
- **Zhiren Quan** (China) - MBA
- **Hui-yi Chen** (Taiwan) - BSN
- **Yunhai Chen** (China) - BSN
- **Jiyeong Kim** (South Korea) - BSN

You may be curious to hear more about what Washburn international students go on to accomplish after they graduate. One of our Fall 2013 graduates, **Rizki Aljupri**, is currently the youngest candidate for Indonesian Senate representing Jakarta Province:

"I graduated from Washburn University with my MBA in December. Now, I am currently running for a senate seat from the province where I was born and raised, Jakarta. The elections will be on April 9, 2014. I started my campaign on December 30th, and it will last for 100 days until April 8. Even though you can't vote, I still hope to get your support."

Binbin Wu, who started out as a one-year exchange student from China and went on to graduate Magna Cum Laude from WU with a BBA in Accounting and Marketing, shared the following:

"I am still at Wake Forest and everything goes well with me...I am currently doing my internship in North Carolina, which will lead to a full-time position with H1B work visa sponsorship upon my graduation. But the more exciting thing is that since I did my internship in San Francisco last summer, I always wanted to go back. I am also offered a full-time position in Deloitte San Francisco office. Deloitte is a leading firm among Big 4, which has been a dream company for all accounting students. I will graduate this December from Wake Forest with my master's and start to work in San Francisco in January 2015. I am very glad everything worked out and I have so many things plan ahead."

We're so proud of all of our graduates and what they go on to accomplish after completing their studies at WU!

Tina Williams **Study Abroad Coordinator**



Coastline of Barbados. (WU Faculty-led Program: WU Law Program in Barbados, Summer 2013). Photo Submitted by Tyler Patterson.

The Study Abroad Photo Essay Contest was established in 2006 to recognize the importance of WU students' international experiences and promote study abroad to other WU students and the community. Congratulations to the 2013 Study Abroad Photo Essay Contest Winners!

First Place: Tyler Patterson, WU Law Student, "An Island Built on Principle" WU Faculty-led Program: WU Law Program in Barbados, Summer 2013

Second Place: Emily Juhnke, Junior Journalism & Public Relations, "Around the World in 106 Days" Semester at Sea, Spring Semester 2013

Third Place: Monica Voth, Senior French Major, "Sharing Cultures in the South of France" Institut Linguistique d'Adenet, Spring Semester 2013

Visit the Office of International Programs website: www.washburn.edu/iip to view the complete winning photo essays.

The International Programs Scholarship Committee awarded scholarships to 102 students participating in study abroad programs in over a dozen different



countries during the summer and fall of 2013. Programs ranged in length from two weeks to an academic year. Forty-five students received scholarships for spring 2013 programs. Included were the following Faculty-led Washburn Transformational Experiences:

Belize – *Study Abroad in Central America* led by Dr. Judith McConnell-Farmer.

Costa Rica – *Service Learning Habitat for Humanity* led by Dr. Randy Pembrook.

Nicaragua – *Service Learning* led by Dr. Richard Ellis.

Students interested in participating in study abroad may begin the exploration process now by visiting a Study Abroad Advisor in the Office of International Programs. To find out more about WU study abroad opportunities visit: www.washburn.edu/iip.

Andy Vogel **International Student Recruitment and Retention Coordinator**

In the fall, major recruiting efforts were focused on our local area community colleges around Kansas, increasing our population of Japanese students and creating new opportunities in Nepal for students to attend Washburn.

New and renewed connections were made in the fall with local schools students and staff. In the spring, visitations of interested international students from Johnson County Community College, Butler and Muar-Hill Academy are planned, a new feature of our campus. While many options exist for continuing higher education in Kansas, no one can match Washburn's academic rank, intimate class size, affordable tuition and opportunities in the capital city for professional development.

Don't assumingly greet students on campus with "Ni hao" anymore. Japanese students are closing in on the Chinese as our largest group of international students at Washburn. Most are through our spring and summer short term study abroad and Intensive English programs. However, after enjoying the comfortable Midwestern life and exciting opportu-

nities on campus, a growing portion decide to stay at Washburn and enroll as full time, degree seeking students.

With the ten year civil war behind them and the drafting of a new constitution for the Himalayan country later this year, Nepal, wedged between China and India, is moving forward. Washburn is looking to provide opportunities to students from this amazing country, with two new students this spring and the prospects of more next fall. I had the opportunity to visit with students and their families in Nepal's capital Kathmandu over winter break and I believe Washburn would be a good fit for some of the excellent students there.

I also had the great opportunity to lead Washburn's first faculty lead study abroad group to India over the winter break to take classes at WU's partner university, Symbiosis International University. We also had the pleasure to ride buses, public trains, domestic flights, New Delhi subway, rickshaws, and walk extensively visiting the Taj Mahal, Ajanta and Ellora caves and numerous sites in Mumbai, Pune, Agra and Delhi. It was unimaginably incredible, chaotic, mystical, maddening, educational, intriguing and enlightening.

On the retention side, Washburn's International Bod's on Bikes and the Presidential Ambassadors for International Students have continued to help make WU internationals feel at home and provide access to the many opportunities that abound on our campus and the surrounding city. The International Club hosted the multifarious Celebration of Cultures, showcasing the talents of our diverse student body and campus community. Besides homework, international students were kept active with the many events and trips planned for nearly every weekend of the fall semester including opportunities to visit historical sites, service learning trips, shopping destinations, capital tours, farmers markets, city market, down-town Topeka and KC, Plaza, Nelson-Atkins, 888, Legends KC, Ranch party, bicycle tour, Buffalo ranch, homecoming parade, BBQ's, tailgating and innumerable other on campus events.

To say the least, it was a busy, yet fantastic fall semester at Washburn!

Features

Costa Rica Service Learning Program

By Dr. Randy Pembrook
Vice President Academic Affairs
Photos submitted by Dr. Randy Pembrook

We began by traveling to San Jose on Friday, January 3rd. The trip through customs was complicated by officials trying to confiscate the shoes we had brought for poor children but one of our students (Edith) who was fluent in Spanish managed to convince the administrator that it truly was in the best interests of Costa Rica to have the shoes find their way to the children. He eventually relented and one week later we saw the happy faces of the children at Pavas as they received their free shoes. In all we transported nearly 400 pairs of shoes and several



dozen backpacks for the children there. This year we tried staying for the first two nights at a very nice Wyndham hotel near the airport. The

manager there held a reception for us and treated us to some tasty Costa Rican appetizers on our first night “in country”.

On Saturday, January 4th, we had a chance to see the beauty of Costa Rica by travelling to Poas Volcano as well as the national waterfall park which included close interactions with several types of animals and birds native to Costa Rica. That evening, we enjoyed indigenous marimba music as we participated in the official welcoming dinner. On Sunday, January 5th, we moved our luggage to the “work hotel” (Hotel America in Heredia) and attended a service at a church doing significant outreach to migrant coffee bean pickers. It was a memorable experience.

From Monday the 6th through Thursday the 9th we were kept busy with various construction opportu-



nities at Camp Roblealto (which literally translates into “Tall Oak”). Project crews made up of Washburn individuals and volunteers from throughout the Midwest included a concrete mixing team, the sidewalk construction team, and the cabin expansion team. All projects were completed on time with the understanding a second team would do additional work on the cabin after Team One departed. In the afternoons, several members of the team would leave to help with games and crafts for the children at Pavas. On Thursday morning, we had the opportunity to zip line high in the mountains. All survived though one team member (not a Washburn individual) had a bit of a run in with a local tree!

On Friday, we investigated potential worksites for 2015. This included an orphanage which is in need of repair to laundry facilities, re-routing of rain water to keep it out of the main building and a stage for the playground area so that programs can be completed there. We are strongly considering this possibility. In addition, we went to Pavas to distribute shoes but also to review the living conditions of migrant workers to determine if something can be done for them. This is also a potential future project as they are in desperate need of a community place for showers and food distribution. After we left, the remaining members of the tour group visited another orphanage and visited a site where a committed individual is trying to help young woman escape from the human trafficking network. These sites are also possibilities for construction projects next year. In addition, Professor Bobbe Mansfield



from Washburn University (and her husband Jerry) also accompanied us on our trip. Besides the care she provided to team members as an excellent nurse, she is also exploring possibilities for Washburn nursing students to attend Costa Rica in the future to acquire Spanish language skills in health settings and provide health screenings to individuals in Costa Rica if details can be accomplished.

On Saturday through Tuesday, we had a second chance to see the remarkable beauty of Costa Rica by travelling to the beach at Tamarindo in the Guanacaste province. The pool and beach provided a wonderful culmination to our trip. Side excursions on horseback, boat and van to watch sea turtles, crocodiles, howler monkeys, and iguanas were very exciting.

The overall goals for the trip included making an international visit to understand a different culture, engaging in community service through construction projects, distributing food and clothing to the needy and enjoying the natural beauty of Costa Rica. All goals were accomplished.



A Transformational Experience in Belize: Reflections and Resolutions

By Dr. Judith Lynne McConnell-Farmer
Professor, Department of Education
Photos submitted by Tina L. Williams

As seen in the following passages the words of the students who participated in Washburn University's *Study Abroad in Belize Program* held from December 28, 2013 through January 10, 2014 are reflective and resolute:

"I rarely had to share my toys, and these children barely have any toys to share. One moment that made me realize this, is when I was taking the shoes off of my own feet to donate to the orphanage. A little girl asked why I was doing this. I told her that I was giving them to her or whoever else needs them. She teared-up and gave me a huge hug. Those are the moments that make you realize you went through a transformational experience." - Brittany Schuman



"The Study Abroad in Belize Program really opened my eyes up to how people around the world live, especially children. It broke my heart to witness the situation some children were in, but at the same time it sparked my interest to help make a difference." - Ashley Murrell

"Not only did coming here open my eyes to how good we have it (hot water is a luxury all too often taken for granted), but also to the amount of children in need of family and education. After being here, I will be more aware of my lifestyle and my purchasing decisions. In addition, I was so deeply touched by the children of Belize. I want to help them in any way that I can even if only for them to know we will not forget them. Furthermore, this experience has made me realize I will want to adopt one day when I am ready start my own family. Until then, I will do



my best to ensure those kids here know they are loved—from afar”. - Courtney Kesselring

I had the privilege to develop and direct the *Fourth Annual Washburn University Study Abroad in Belize Program*. Sixteen students from a variety of majors accompanied Tina Williams, the Washburn University Study Abroad Coordinator, Tim Collins, the Washburn University Women’s Soccer Team Coach, and I to Belize. Seldom do our Washburn University undergraduate students have a venue to experience an international transformational experience and the chance to become part of a culture quite different from their own. The study abroad programs are such an important and vital opportunity to travel away from what is familiar; to widen one’s horizons, to face the unfamiliar, learn from it and resolve to make the world a better place having experienced a transformation.

Ours is a service-related study abroad program where volunteering is at the core of our activities. In Belize, we visited one public orphanage, Liberty Children’s Home in Ladyville and two public orphanages, Dorothy Menzies Children’s Home in Belize City and King’s Children’s Home near Belmopan, the capital city of Belize. At the orphanages our students taught



planned lessons with the children in addition to cleaning the buildings and performing yard work. At Dorothy Menzies Children’s Home we spent an extra day tutoring and performing a variety of services for the orphanage. Dorothy Menzies Children’s Home was truly the or-

phanage most in need and from which we recall the children’s faces and voices most poignantly. For me two of the most touching moments were when a little shoeless and bedraggled six year-old girl motioned for me to bend toward her and in a whisper said, “I will keep you in my prayers”. Another dusty-faced

young boy looked pleadingly at me and said, “Will you be my mommy?”, “Are you coming back?”, “Can you take me with you?”.



Children from Belize posing like an Ichabod.™

Experiencing the stark reality of poverty and seeing children in extreme need is emotionally disquieting. Being in orphanages where living conditions offer only the bare necessities of life and forming relationships with children who are hungry and, yet, hopeful of a better life is heart-wrenching. Students who are experiencing for the first time how others live in developing countries naturally attempt to make sense of the larger world as it envelopes them. The emotional struggles which our students confront are perhaps best conveyed in their own reflections.

“This experience has been far more transformational than I could have ever imagined. Not only did I learn about another culture and lifestyle, I actually got to live it firsthand. Experiencing how most of our world lives has been such an eye opening journey. We have so much to be thankful for, yet we come to take it for granted. I will never forget the faces I have seen, the laughter I have heard from children with the most difficult circumstances, and the lesson I walk away with from this Study Abroad. My favorite part of my trip wasn’t the beauty of the Mayan Ruins; it wasn’t kayaking or zip-lining through the Rainforest. It was the experience of feeling as though I impacted someone other than myself. However these children taught me so much more. Happiness is not at all measured by the amount of things you possess. The children have hope and always continue to smile with



situation unimaginable. Life is so much more than the dumb things we complain about.”

- Brooke Brennan

“...whether it was simply holding them, listening to them, or admiring their art children just want to know they matter in this world to someone; especially when they wake up in an orphanage.”

- Denise Webb

“This trip was truly and indescribable experience, anything I say won’t do it justice, you truly need to experience it for yourself. The gratefulness of the children is amazing, although they know we’re only there to visit they open up and love you anyways and many times you learn more from them than you teach them. They make the best of what they have while we always think we need more.”

- Erin Macaronas

“There have been so many moments that I will keep close to my heart. The children I’ve come in contact with have been so open. We’re strangers to them, but they’ve crawled into our arms and laps and been so caring, especially the children at Dorothy Menzies. They have practically nothing, but are so content. They’ve loved everything we’ve done with them. When I get back to the states I’ll be more aware of my belongings and have a whole new appreciation. I have more than enough. It breaks my heart that those children don’t have someone to tuck them in at night and knowing that they sleep multiple children in a small bed. I’m so blessed to have my life—and this trip makes me more aware and thankful for the things I do have.” - Ryan Vobach

For the semester preceding our program in Belize we met for two hours every Sunday at my home in Topeka. Enrollment in ED 474: Study Abroad in Belize Program, a three-credit course was prerequisite to participation in the Belize experience. It was during these preliminary sessions that students presented research topics pertinent to Belize, such as, the economy, food, political structure, climate, culture, history, etc. A midterm exam and final exam were part of the course. Teams of students designed and prepared educational activities to do with the children in Belize and posters to be presented at the

Belizean International Symposium on Education. Our weekly meetings fostered our development as a community of learners and created the basis of trust that was necessary for traveling together, living together and sharing information which lead to transformations. These nightly meetings were followed by individual journalings in which the students described and reflected on their daily activities in Belize. Their journals served as a data base for their reflective papers and oral presentations completed after they returned to campus.

The Study Abroad in Belize Program has a strong cultural component. Students interact with local Belizean adults and children at the orphanages on the mainland in Belize and at the island elementary-middle school at Caye Caulker. There are approximately one hundred islands, called cayes, which are part of Belize. For two half-days we taught and tutored children at the island school using lesson plans and materials that were prepared in advance by our students for the program. As a group we were able to transport over 1,000 pounds of clothing, donated shoes, medical supplies and school supplies for the children at the orphanages and the island school. In memory of Kahlyn Heine, who attended our 2011-2012 program in Belize, her mother organized a shoe drive for the children of Belize. Due to her efforts 56 pairs of black school shoes each stuffed with socks and small toys were given to the children at the orphanages.

A variety of planned excursions complemented each other during the program. We journeyed inland to view a group of Mayan Temples that were reclaimed from the jungle. Our students participated in a four-day *Belizean International Symposium on Education*, which was attended by an assortment of professional educators from Belize, the USA and Canada. During the symposium our students presented posters at Poster Sessions held in Belize City and at the University of Belize in Belmopan. Additional excursions included swimming in the Inland Blue Hole, going swimming and kayaking at the Bacab Eco Park, zip-lining through the rainforest, snorkeling in the Caribbean Sea, and having lunch with a Belizean family at their home.

The words of Søren Kierkegaard, a 19TH century philosopher, are as true for my students as they were

when first spoken in 1843, “It is quite true what philosophy says; that life must be understood backwards. But then one forgets the other principle: that it must be lived forwards”. Every evening while in Belize we gathered for a reflective review of the day. It was during those nightly sessions our students shared their individual perspectives on the day’s activities. Each day the group established a firmer sense of trust and mutual purpose. During our last session, after our luggage was packed and waiting in our rooms, we talked, shared, reaffirmed and cried at the reality that we might never again see the Belizean children we had come to love.

“This trip has opened my eyes to many things. First thing that I realized was I have a voice and skills that can make a difference. I don’t have to be in a group of people to change a person’s life. Groups do help and more gets done with multiple people but to make a change in someone life, you have to get out of your bubble and embrace what they are going through. I have also realized that I am very blessed with the life I live. I have a lot to give to those who need our help.” - Natalie Jones

“I have transformed in many ways. Overall, I have become a much greater person in just 13 days.”
- Garret Fenley

“I’m not returning from this journey a new person, but am returning with a new appreciation and understanding for life, humanity, and love. You can’t prepare yourself for this kind of transformational experience and as hard as you try, you can’t stay disconnected enough to not be forever changed.”
- Lauren Journot

“This trip was very grounding to me. I saw and experienced how many children live in everyday life and they are still happy. It made me reflect on my own life and I realized how blessed I am and really changed my outlook on life. I am going to be more appreciative and take nothing for granted and do more to help the less fortunate.”
- Tasha Whittington

“This experience help me to understand that as a teacher there will be times that I am not fully in control of the situation or that I might not know the best way to proceed in a lesson, but if I persevere and have faith in my own knowledge and skills as an educator, everything will come together for both the students and myself. As the great Caribbean poet, Bob Marley, put it, “Don’t worry about a thing, because every little thing is gonna work out fine!” - Jacob Lewis

“This experience has truly, in every sense of the phrase, “changed my life.” I cannot go home and return to my everyday routine without thinking about the kids in Belize. They are part of me now, and I will never forget them, no matter what I do. Wasting things and throwing things away will no longer be an option for me; I will never feel like I don’t have enough food or clothing again; and most importantly, I will never take my family for granted like I used to do. This trip has had such an incredible impact on my heart and soul. I appreciate hearing about the opportunity to come to Belize and give as much as I was capable of giving of myself and receiving such an invaluable one-of-a-kind lesson in return.”
- Rachel Seuell

The Study Abroad in Belize Program is truly transformational. Our students became reflective, self-examined, generous, passionate and resolved to use their new found skills and abilities to better themselves and their world.



Congratulations!

International Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to the following students who have been awarded various scholarships.



- ◆ **Class of 1910 Fund:** Jongtak Choi, Yangfang Mao
- ◆ **Class of 1912 Fund:** Yaqi Tang, Stan Kanaeva, Valeriya Kanaeva, Yafei Wang
- ◆ **ICT/William O. Wagnon:** Dario Munoz
- ◆ **Rotary-Topeka Downtown Club:** Hyong Kim il
- ◆ **ICT-Bazaar International Studies:** Lina Xu, Xiaoyun Yu, Hamad Nooh, Sijan Mainali, Mairui Li, Sherzod Kadirov, Arkaduisz Kozacuk
- ◆ **Clothier International Programs:** Yunzhu Feng, Qiujie Li, Won Kim, Huimin Liu, Narongsak Sapanan, Zhiren Quan
- ◆ **International Students:** Jing Wang
- ◆ **Hula International Student:** Wang Pan
- ◆ **International Education Endowment:** Isabella Gichiri, Samir Haikal, Nzingha Banks, Jia Liu, Xiliang Shi, Sophie O'Neill, Iffat Alrowaithy, Heng Zhong, Yifan Lin, Xiangrui Zheng
- ◆ **ICT/Betty "Bo" Sheafor:** Binying Fang
- ◆ **Sturm/Workman Family International:** Zai Yujie
- ◆ **Ruth Walker O'Riley:** Anzhelika Tolstikhina, Yacine Gaye, Nikhhil Devgan