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Stories From Around the World

DSU?s Study Abroad Program takes ?What I Did on My Summer Vacation? to a whole new level! Del State students enjoy writing about their experiences abroad on summer or semester programs from Spain to China. Here is a small sampling of their comments:

Agriculture Studies in Namibia

One day they met the Prime Minister.
Another day they ate barbecue at a homestead farm in the Namibian outback.
Altogether it was an unforgettable three weeks in a place few Americans will ever see.

Namibia is a country of spectacular mountains, deserts, canyons, and savannah that lies along the Atlantic coast of Africa.

On a late-spring visit to Namibia in 2004, students in the **Namibian Study Abroad Program**, accompanied by John Graham, Assistant Vice President for International Affairs, and Dr. Gustav Ofosu, Chair of DSU?s Department of Biology, visited the University of Namibia (UNAM).

The rural country was the perfect setting for studies in biology, natural resources, agriculture, and economic development:

- Students learned about the management of Namibia?s small-scale farms, which are succeeding thanks to rural development projects undertaken since the country?s independence.
- DSU visitors toured crop science research facilities.
- Students also attended a lecture at the Ministry of Women?s Affairs and Child Welfare.

In the country?s capital, Windhoek, students undertook a range of political studies:

- They met the Namibian Prime Minister and the Speaker of the National Assembly (the nation?s Congress).
- Participants discussed Namibia?s political framework with the executive director of the Namibia Institute for Democracy.
- Students were provided with overviews of agriculture, water, and rural development, as well as education, employment, and labor relations at government ministry meetings.

In the Cultural Exploration phase of their visit, students observed first-hand the day-to-day tasks of rural people at the homestead of Chief Helman Iipumbu. At the homestead they witnessed and sometimes participated in demonstrations in planting, harvesting, food processing, food storage, and the preparation of traditional dishes.

Interviewed just before their departure from Africa, students were uniformly enthusiastic in their responses.

- ?The program has been exceptional.? *(Robin Abernathy, Horticulture major)*
- ??more than I ever thought it would be.? *(Beth Swain, Pre-Veterinary major)*
- ?I?ve learned a lot about myself, I?ve learned about developing countries, and I?ve learned about other people. I have a lot of big dreams, and this trip will help me to accomplish them.? *(Patricia Nugent, Plant Science and Biology major)*
- ?It might be an ocean away, but it?s still an ocean close.? *(Isis Johnson, Wildlife Conservation and Entomology major)*

?There is more to this world than the U.S. or North America,? noted food and nutrition major Crystal Jackson. ?There are people on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, similar to but different from me. Africa taught me that I am only a small piece of this world; in order for me to make an effect on the earth, I must be willing to embrace and accept new challenges and new opportunities.

?Study abroad is an opportunity that all students should take advantage of,? she continued. ?You will never be the same. Yes, knowledge is power, but experience with knowledge can really help you expand your horizons.?

Business Management in Europe

Risen from the ashes of World War II some 60 years ago, the continent of Europe is becoming a global powerhouse. Business students can witness historic changes through the **School of Management?s Study Abroad Programs** in Europe. The School of Management has developed links with other institutions to allow students to study abroad for a semester or a summer, and transfer credits back to DSU.

One early beneficiary of these arrangements was Heidi Brison, who participated in an internship at a graduate business school in Nice, on the beautiful French Riviera.

Management students Samanthia Buchanan and Danielle Chase took classes at L?École Supérieure des Sciences Economiques et Commerciales in France?s Loire Valley. The school?s focus on a wide range of commercial, economic, and social issues provides a unique opportunity for students who wish to obtain insights into European affairs and the growing significance of the EU.

Management major Justin Baylor enlarged his understanding of the European Union in Barcelona, Spain, an important commercial and cultural center. He pursued his goals not only in course work, but also in tours and cultural events?all the while sharpening his Spanish language skills.

Culture and Society in New Zealand

Like many other students, Racquel Johnson earned credits toward her English degree at DSU this fall. But *unlike* most other students, she earned them while living at the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Her trip was organized by a company called AustraLearn and coordinated through DSU?s Office of International Affairs.

?I met all kinds of people from all over the United States,? Racquel wrote later. ?We all immediately hit it off.? Her roommates were from Germany and China, and she met people of many other nationalities from around the world.

Racquel enjoyed some truly exciting experiences, such as exploring caves and skydiving. The students went to movies, film festivals, conventions, and enjoyed the exciting nightlife in Wellington??one of my favorite cities,? Racquel declared.

At a convention, she met stars from ?The Lord of the Rings,? the Oscar-winning movie series filmed in scenic New Zealand. She was thrilled. ?To meet these cast members definitely was a highlight and a blessing in my life that I will never forget.?

Life in Wellington was not all fun and games, of course. Racquel wrote serious academic papers on Ragtime to Rap, Maori Society and Culture, and Religions of India.

?I enjoyed these classes thoroughly and was definitely challenged through the abundance of assignments,? she said. ?I gained useful knowledge from each lecturer.

?I am just incredibly thankful for the experience I had and thank the people who helped make it possible.?

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