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International Perspectives

OSU students studying & working abroad

Life in Ecuador: Ecosystems and self-discovery



Shari Fluter at the entrance to the Jatun Sacha reserve in the Amazon Basin, Ecuador.

Shari is a senior double-majoring in Horticulture and the International Degree and enrolled in the University Honors College. She interned Winter 1999 in Ecuador with Jatun Sacha, a private foundation with the goals of promoting scientific research and investigation, conservation and protection of natural and renewable resources, and environmental education.

SHARI FLUTER

One of the most common questions I am asked after telling someone I just got back from the Amazon is "Didn't it rain all the time you were there?" The answer is no. But the rain did play an integral part in my time there. Unlike the 6-month overcast drizzle we get in the Northwest, storms in the Amazon Basin are fast and furious. Often it would be beautiful, clear, sunny and hot for half of the day, either morning or night and then turn humid, windy, and wet, with huge claps of thunder and lightening.

The rain really was amazing. If you got stuck in a rainstorm, you were usually completely drenched in about a minute. Shallow lakes could be formed in a matter of minutes. Rivers and streams would

“ Technically you wouldn't need Spanish to get by at Jatun Sacha. The question, though, is are you content just to get by? ”

SHARI FLUTER, SENIOR

double or triple in size, and then return to normal within a few hours. At night after a storm you could walk along the road, shine your flashlight into the ditch and find eels and 8" fish just hanging out.

Technically you wouldn't need Spanish to get by at Jatun Sacha. The question, though, is are you content just to get by? Some of my favorite memories are hearing the knock on the wall and having one of the park guards sing me a morning greeting in Spanish and working alongside other employees, learning about their life, where and how they lived, what they played when they were kids, how they

make their favorite meal, what the ants were looking for as they scurried around, and what you could cure with a given plant. Because of my Spanish, a whole new world opened up to me - a view of life that the others would never learn about, at least not directly from the source. The fact that I had gotten past the state of being a regular tourist and had actually become part of people's lives made me never want to leave.

Many of the most important things that I took away from my internship weren't about growing plants but what I learned about myself and the independence that comes from being thrown into some pretty screwy situations with nothing to bail me out except my own creativity. The jams I got myself into led to some of the most unexpected joys that I experienced in Ecuador.

The other thing I will never forget is that plants aren't just green things growing out of the ground. They are providers of food, medicine, lifestyles, and culture. In my thesis research, I learned not to just look at a plant's appearance, but at its value for what it can provide the people and the rest of the ecosystem.

Learning Japanese? understanding culture helps

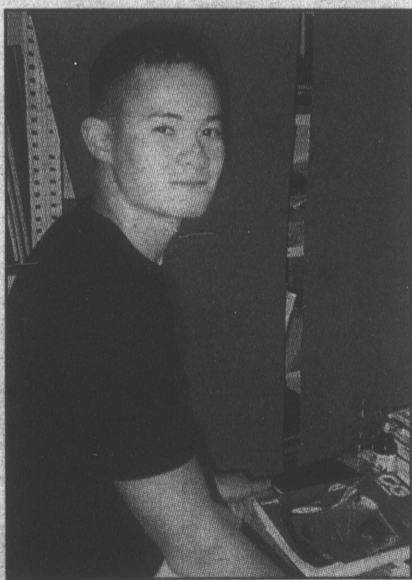
Matthew is a senior in Applied Visual Arts and in the International Degree Program. He studied in Japan in 1997-98, and during Summer of 1999 he completed an internship in Tokyo with Wieden and Kennedy.

MATTHEW HO

I chose to study abroad in Japan because I thought it would be such an educational experience. I thought I would become a more well-rounded person. I thought I would meet many people to help open doors for my career. I thought it would make me more diverse and help me understand people better. Wrong.

All of these things did happen but they weren't the reasons why I chose to study abroad. I was only an immature sophomore in college when I studied in Japan, and my thinking at the time did not make my career and education top priorities. But I knew the experience would be fun, and that was the determining factor. Little did I know what I was getting myself into.

Don't get me wrong, my study abroad experience in '97 was a blast. But fun didn't come as easily as I thought. If studying Japanese at Waseda University in Tokyo was challenging, then studying Japanese for the rest of the 18 or so hours of the day when I wasn't in school was completely draining. I came to realize that studying the language was crucial, but it was the easy part. What was most difficult was being able to understand the culture, which makes learning the language come much more naturally. I was constantly humiliated because of my lack of understanding of the Japanese culture and language. Through this humbling experience, slowly I was



Matthew Ho at a makeshift desk on a particularly chaotic day at Wieden and Kennedy, Tokyo.

able to break down the barrier between me and the Japanese culture and language. Only then was I able to truly enjoy my experience in Japan.

But the benefits of this experience did not end with having fun in Japan. In fact, my language ability and my understanding of the culture allowed me to get an internship in Tokyo this past summer at Wieden and Kennedy. This internship was a total success only because of my previous study abroad experience. Being in an office of half English speakers and half Japanese, I was able to cross the line between the two, sometimes even being the middle man. I feel that being able to relate to and understand people is what makes a successful person, and that this is what education is all about. This is what studying abroad in Japan did for me.

Return to Germany helps refine plans for the future

Kim is a senior in German and also in the University Honors College. She interned in Germany in Spring 1998 and remained for a year-long study program.

KIMBERLY WEIL

My dream of going to Germany became a reality after I was accepted for an internship in Ulm, spring term 1998. After my internship, I also studied for a year in Freiburg, making my overseas experience almost 17 months long.

My first motivation for going to Germany was to learn German fluently and to return to the country I had fallen in love with in 1994 on a high school exchange program. I was also there to gain experiences needed for a position, after graduation, in international business. I felt that my internship and study abroad would greatly help my chances at finding a job speaking German.

It is probably impossible to go on such trip and not learn something that changes you in a significant way. I realized that I genuinely love languages and thrive on the challenge of mastering them. Once in Freiburg, I began taking Spanish to fulfill part of my German major requirements and in February 1999, I took an intensive language class in Spain for a month. By being in Spain (like in Germany), I was forced to use the things I learned in class and by the end of my trip, I was able to communicate with the people around me, a very exciting personal achievement.

As a result of my study abroad, I came back to the USA with a different idea of what I wanted



Kim Weil with German conversation partner Sandra Betz in Heidelberg, Germany.

to do in the future. I didn't want to concentrate solely on business, but rather on languages, and even changed my business major to a minor in order to continue taking Spanish my senior year. I would like to go into the Peace Corps after graduation or work in a Spanish-speaking country to improve my fluency, much like I did when I went to Germany. This training would enable me to pursue a Master's degree in interpretation and translation (one needs to be proficient in two languages) or even get my teaching certification. My overseas experience was beneficial to me because it helped me refine my ideas about what I want to do in the future, something that wouldn't have happened if I hadn't opened myself up to the challenge of learning a language.

East meets West on trans-Siberian railroad adventure

Three Americans travel
5,308 miles from Moscow
to Vladivostok by train

Jill, now a graduate student in mathematics, completed honors baccalaureates in 1999 in mathematics and the International Degree. She studied in Russia during 1998-99.

JILL LOMBAER

I studied in Russia for the 1998-99 school year. With two months of winter break and no plane fare home, I made the obvious choice of spending January in Siberia. After all, there I was in Russia in December, and I could still feel all my toes. I had always dreamed of riding on the trans-Siberian railroad.

However, I had heard some pretty nasty stories of robbery and murder, and was afraid to go alone. So I convinced two of my more gullible American friends to go with me, and we set off on the 5,308 mile trek of the trans-Siberian from Moscow to Vladivostok, crossing eight time zones!

The trip took twenty-four days and was quite possibly the most exciting and best experience of my life thus far. Upon return to America, I read what some others had published about their experiences on the trans-Siberian. I was aghast! All they did was complain and tell horror stories. Of course the trip was not all comfort and luxury, but it was truly wonderful! Perhaps our opinions differed so greatly because I had already spent four months living in a small Russian city. I had grown used to and fond of Russia and Russians despite their quirks and discomforts. It rained me to read such negative opinions of this country and people I had grown to love.

The most common way to travel long distances by train in Russia is in a kupé - a high ceilinged six by eight foot compartment with two upper and two lower beds. There are nine kupés per wagon making for a total of thirty six people in each kupé car. After a couple days, life

becomes rather surreal. There is the constant clickity-clack of the train tracks only relieved by the countering clickity-clack of another train passing. This incessant rhythm combined with the perpetual motion and claustrophobic nature of the compartments, causes passengers to sleep a lot. People would also gather at the end of the wagons to smoke and chat. After meeting people, we would often all squeeze into one kupé to drink, play cards and talk. Many people were surprised to find three Americans on board in the middle of January. Some had never met Americans before and took our pictures to show their friends the strange Americans they had met. We made many friends and had lots of fascinating conversations, memories to last a lifetime.

During tedious train rides, one lives for the stops. At the longer stops there are usually people lining the platforms selling steamed potatoes, frozen fish, nuts, pastries, bread, and ice cream, also kiosks full of juice, water, vodka, fruit, chips, candy, and just-add-hot-water meals. We would rush out and stock up on food and beverages to last until the next long stop. Every wagon had a samovar of boiling water, so we had a lot of tea and cup-of-noodles type meals. The temperature ranged from five to negative twenty-five degrees Fahrenheit. Bursting out of the tropical temperatures and stuffy, smelly air of thirty-six people in close confinement into the fresh, crisp, freezing cold air of the platform was heavenly.

As I look back, the trip seems almost magical. The scenery was awe-inspiring. I never knew there were so many birch trees in the world! There were forests upon snow-covered forests of them, for as far as the eye could see, and undoubtedly even farther in some places. We stopped in Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, Khabarovsk, and Vladivostok on the way there, and then in Krasnoyarsk and Yekaterinburg on the way back. In Irkutsk, we caught a ride out to the edge of Lake Baikal. It was the coldest day of our entire journey, but none of us complained.



Jill Lombaer sets out on a 5,308 mile trek of the trans-Siberian from Moscow to Vladivostok, crossing eight time zones, on the trans-Siberian railroad.

We were too busy experiencing the beauty surrounding us. While in Ulan-Ude we visited a nearby Buryat Buddhist village. It was hard to believe we were still in Russia. Once we had crossed the Urals, the Asian influence immediately started making itself known. Signs were in Russian and characters rather than in Russian, English or German. I found it fascinating and chose to wander through the village on my own. As I was wandering, a man approached and asked if I was a lama. He was, of course, speaking Russian, and I made him repeat himself several times. Finally there was no escaping it; he thought I was a lama! I explained that I wasn't and went on my way, chuckling to myself. In Vladivostok, a rather dirty and run-down industrial town, we walked out onto a frozen bay and chatted with ice fishermen.

In Krasnoyarsk, we visited a park full of unbelievably intricate ice sculptures: dragons, mermaids, palm trees, soldiers, even an enormous Coke bear holding a bottle of Coca Cola.

East meets West, I thought to myself with a grin. In Yekaterinburg we were swept away by a handful of local students who wanted to know everything there was to know about America. They proudly showed us their city and took us

through a museum where we shook hands with the man who had discovered the bones of the murdered Romanov family.

After those visits, we headed back to Moscow and the end of our trip. When I first decided I wanted to travel the trans-Siberian, I was still in America and a travel agent said it would cost at least \$2000. However, with my Russian student identification card, the entire trip cost me only \$400, including train fare, souvenirs, food, and hotel rooms. We ate at nice restaurants and stayed in nice hotels. It was off season, and the dollar was very strong due to the economic crisis in Russia.

I haven't done the experience justice here. It was the trip of a lifetime and, I haven't even scratched the surface of what I saw, felt, heard, smelled and tasted on my journey.

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**JILL LOMBAER,
GRADUATE STUDENT**

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International Options

As we approach the 21st century, increasing numbers of OSU students are recognizing that an international experience is a vital part of their education. Studying or working abroad is the single most effective and dramatic experience you can have to broaden your international outlook and to gain greater perspective on your own country. Students who return from OSU overseas study programs often categorize their time abroad as the most meaningful educational and personal experience of their college career and a significant accomplishment which they highlight in employment or graduate school applications.

The Office of International Programs offers three exciting ways to add an international dimension to your education:

Study Abroad

Imagine! OSU offers over 45 study abroad programs in more than 20 countries! For all these programs, you earn OSU credit and can apply your OSU financial aid. No matter what your major, you can study for a term, semester, or year in Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, or Oceania. Some programs require foreign language; many programs do not. It is important to plan early!

International Internships

Internships are an ideal way not only to earn OSU credit but also to gain professional experience and learn practical skills relevant to your future employment. Imagine an internship in an international setting! Through a Global Graduates internship, you can gain experience working in your academic field while increasing your language proficiency and ability to work in a different cultural environment. Internships are available all over the world in a wide range of disciplines. Not all internships require language background.

International Degree

Through OSU's innovative International Degree program, you can now earn TWO concurrent bachelor's degrees: one in any major on campus, and a second in international studies in the same field. Requirements include language study through fourth-year college level, additional courses from OSU's curriculum, study or work overseas, and a thesis internationalizing your primary degree. Imagine the possibilities!

Stop by Snell Hall 444 to find out more. Or check out our website at osu.orst.edu/international/.

Mexican forests, land-use studied

Autumn is a senior double-majoring in Natural Resources and the International Degree and also a student in the University Honors College. She studied and interned in Costa Rica in 1998 and interned in Mexico during summer of 1999 with the Harvard Forest Summer Program.

AUTUMN BRYANT

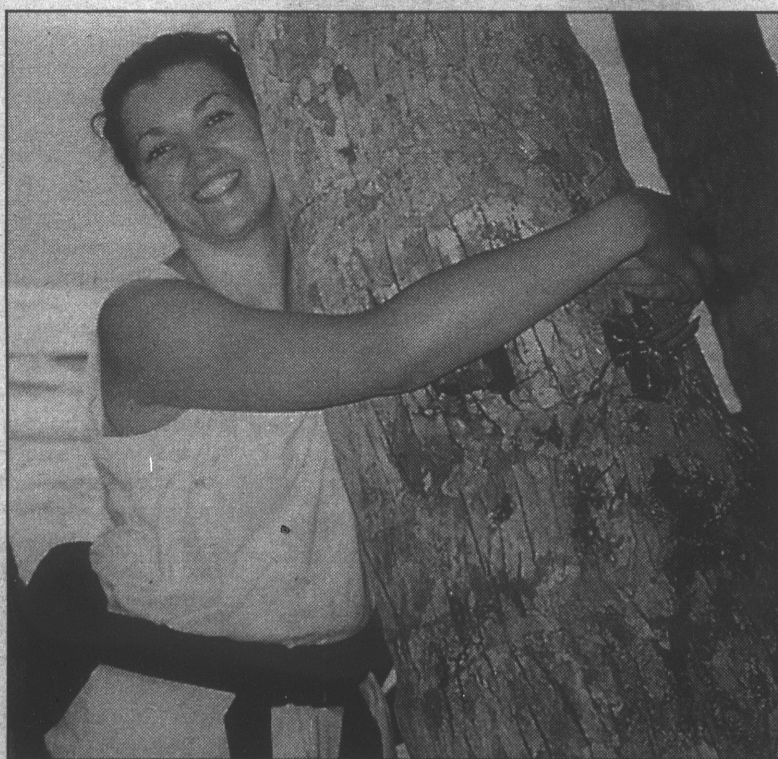
The Southern Yucatan Peninsular Region (SYPR) is a unique landscape to study land-use changes and forest conservation. Two civilizations practicing a similar

land-use, though separated by thousands of years, gives scientists a valuable opportunity to study the effects of forest succession over varying amounts of time. My position as a research assistant for the Harvard Forest Summer Program gave me the opportunity to be a part of this research.

I spent three months in Campeche, Mexico working for Diego Perez Salicrup, a post-doc studying the structure of the three general forest types found on the Yucatan Peninsula. A second post-doc, Barbara Lawrence,

is studying nutrient cycling in early successional forests recovering from slash and burn agriculture. Our research, though specific in its scope, has a much broader application.

The Yucatan Peninsula was densely populated only a thousand years ago by Mayans. The Mayans practiced intensive agriculture and cleared significant areas of land to build their temples, metropolis, and peasant communities. Today rural farmers in Campeche practice slash and burn agriculture and grow crops similar to those of their pre-Hispanic ancestors. Studying the structure and nutrient cycles of forests that have regenerated over a thousand years and those recently under agriculture can give us a better idea of how to sustainably manage forestland before and after human use.



Autumn Bryant, during one of many encounters with tropical forests.

Experiences abroad: study and work differ

Toni is a senior in Nutrition and Food Management with a pre-med option, and is also in the International Degree Program. She studied in Ecuador in Winter and Spring of 1998, and during Summer of 1999 she completed an internship in Mexico at CASA (Centro para los Adolescentes), an agency which provides health and social services to young people and their families.

TONI PUSATERI

To compare a study abroad experience with working abroad is like trying to compare a rose with a lily. They look different and each has a different scent, yet both are exquisite to see and smell. My life has been enriched beyond measure from my study in Ecuador and my work in Mexico.

What stands out in my mind about Ecuador is my incredible host family. Everything was so new, exciting yet scary, and I was very thankful for the stability that my host family provided—a safe and loving environment, lots of patience with my language ability, and much needed advice about everything. Throughout my seven-month stay they taught me so much, not only about Ecuadorian culture, but also about life and about myself. My older brother taught me to salsa dance, my mom taught me to cook, my dad taught me to take pride in the little things and my little brother taught me to play (especially how to have a water fight during Carnival). I loved all the family meals together, weekend family trips, and all the nights when the five of us snuggled together in the main bedroom watching TV and laughing. I remember my host mom giving the left over food to the people begging on the streets and my host brother running after a bus with a little paper in his hand that an older señora had dropped. They taught me to love every aspect of life and to seek out the compassion that was sleeping somewhere inside me.

The most noticeable difference about my work abroad in Mexico was that I didn't have to worry about the language barrier. It felt like I just jumped right into the experience with no fear. My previous study abroad definitely gave me an edge as far as speaking skills, general knowledge of culture and learning to adapt. I arrived in Mexico feeling pure excitement and my experience proved to be all that I had hoped for and more. Working for CASA was extraordinary! If I had to pick a highlight, it would have to be helping deliver babies with the mid-



Toni Pusateri after assisting with her first birth at Centro para los Adolescentes.

wives. I witnessed 15 births and I cannot describe well enough the miracle of seeing a child being born. I remember walking the halls of the clinic in the middle of the night with Maria, the first mother I worked with. I was with her throughout her entire labor, holding her hand and giving her words of encouragement. After the baby was born she looked into my eyes with such gratitude and said "Thank you, I couldn't have done it without you." In that moment I realized that the little things in life truly are the most important. Just knowing that maybe, just maybe, I made it a little easier for a new mother to bring her baby into this world was enough to make my trip an unforgettable and utterly rewarding experience.

My intention in studying and working abroad was to improve my language ability. I never dreamed it would transform my life in such an incredible way. Living abroad is a gift that is difficult to put into words; it must be experienced. It brings unique rewards to each person who has the courage to jump into the unknown and fly.

"Certainly travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living." —Miriam Beard

Canada offers international flavor

Roommates teach American how America is seen by other countries

Donna is a senior double-majoring in Exercise and Sports Science and History, and spent a semester at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C.

DONNA KNIGHT

Before I graduated, I knew that I wanted to spend time at a university in another country. I had spent a summer working in Vancouver, British Columbia. From my time up there, I knew that Canada was different enough from the States to give me an international experience without spending a fortune on airfare.

I attended the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver. With a student population of 35,000, the school was a lot larger than what I'm used to down here. The lines that I thought were so long at the OSU Bookstore were nothing compared to the lines I faced up there.

UBC offered a variety of living options. I lived in a townhouse only five minutes from my classes. I learned most of my lessons about other countries from my roommates: Ahmed, a Ph.D. student from Tunisia; Roland, a law student from Australia, and Heichi from Toronto. When Heichi and I would go shopping, she wouldn't buy anything that had an American flag on it. So much for Tommy Hilfiger and Ralph Lauren. From my roommates, I learned a lot about how America is seen by other countries.

My education didn't end at home. I took an American Foreign Policy class. My classmates thought that it was hilarious that I would take the class in Canada but I wanted to see how other people saw U.S. policies. I got a fairly unbiased view and my classmates were not shy in voicing their opinions which became challenging by the end of the term.

I gained a lot from my time up north. I had a lot of experiences that I wouldn't have had if I'd stayed here in Corvallis and enjoyed my time away. I got a unique view of how Canadians see the U.S. and that in turn made me think about what it's like to be from this country. The time I spent in Vancouver added to my college education and I found that a person can have an international experience even only six hours away from home.

Classes + beach + engineering interviews = possibilities

Jerrod is a senior double-majoring in Mechanical Engineering and the International Degree, and a student in the University Honors College. He spent 1997-98 studying at the University of Sussex, and returned to spend spring term 1998 in Santander, Spain.

JERROD PETERSON

I had such an incredible time studying in Santander. My host family was wonderful and our professors were great. They made getting up and going to class each morning more of a pleasure than I ever remember it being at OSU. While in Spain, I was able to see the cathedrals of León and Burgos, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, the famous streets of Pamplona where the Running of the Bulls occurs each July, and the beautiful Picos de Europa mountains, only a few hours by bus from Santander. My best memories, however, are not of traveling or of famous places, but of late afternoons on the relaxing beaches of Santander. We would arrive there after class each day and stay until the sun set, with nothing in particular to do except talk to people we met and sing songs to the sound of Matt Price's ukulele. You learn a lot of important things about life without the constant stress of midterm exams hanging over your head.

I received a summer research award through the International Degree Program, which really opened up possibilities for my ID/Honors College thesis. My thesis focuses

on how the internet is changing the design process in the field of mechanical engineering, both in the U.S. and in Europe, and on the use of web-based CAD/CAM technology by U.S. and European design and manufacturing companies.

So before returning home from Spain, I traveled to England and Germany to conduct interviews. In England I interviewed two professors. Dr. Peter Childs, who had been my professor when I studied at the University of Sussex in Brighton the previous year, filled out my research questionnaire and showed me how he uses the internet as a design researcher. These uses were primarily educational-internet sites, charts, diagrams, and links which he has incorporated in both the courses that he teaches and a textbook he has written. The other professor, Dr. Paul Rodgers of the University of Cambridge, also filled out my questionnaire and showed me his uses of the internet. The most interesting was a spatial 3-D program produced by



This photo of Jerrod Peterson (back row, fourth from right) with fellow OSU students on Santander, Spain study program appeared in the university newspaper.

ActiveWorlds. He and his design colleagues from all around the world can access the program simultaneously, and it then can serve as a "virtual office" where he can walk around, "bump into" his colleagues, and casually exchange ideas on current projects, much as designers do in a traditional office setting.

For my final interview I traveled to Munich, Germany to interview Mr. Ralf Stetter at a company called LogiCad3D. This

small company produces devices of exceptional quality: special mouse controllers for use in 3-D CAD programs and in robotics. These devices are of such high integrity and sensitivity that they have been used by American astronauts doing work with robotic arms on Space Shuttle missions. An interview with a European engineer from such a company is invaluable for my thesis research. He also offered me the possibility of an internship position there next year!

Traveling around Europe to do interviews for my thesis was such a great experience. My ID summer research grant covered the costs of my Europass, food, and hostels. Most of the time, though, I was able to stay with friends in England I had met

the previous year, which made the trip even more exciting. The most interesting experience was passing through Paris for the fifth time in my life, crossing between the city's major train stations on the Metro. By the fifth time it starts to feel weird ... familiar, but in an eerie way. I felt like a commuter: not stressed at all about where I was going or how I would get there, only about the waits between trains.

Make a new friend...right here on campus!

Help an international student practice English and adjust to OSU, gain intercultural knowledge and experience, make a new friend. Meet one-on-one with a student for an hour per week for one term. Time, place and meeting activity are decided by each conversing pair.

Gary Vaughn, 1997 OSU graduate with an Honors Baccalaureate in Microbiology, who

went on to study in Thailand on a Fulbright scholarship, shared these observations about his conversant experience: "The countries where my conversants came from are no longer lands surrounded by a border on a map. Now these countries have names and faces. They are alive."

For over 30 years, OSU's English Language Institute has been matching conversation

partners. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds; although most are from Asia or the Middle East and are undergraduate or graduate-age. Pairs are matched according to mutual interests and personal preferences. This Fall there will have about 50 new and 50 continuing students. There are also opportunities to greet new students and go on trips and attend parties together. Conversants often

find that travel, jobs, or further studies grow from their conversing experiences. This is a wonderful way to broaden not only your academic life, but also your worldview and your future.

For more information, contact Ruth Sitton DeMaio, 737-6981, Ruth.DeMaio@orst.edu Snell 304A, OSU English Language Institute

Internship offers insight into China's U.S. relations

Hien is a senior double-majoring in Political Science and the International Degree. He spent a year studying in Beijing, China.

HIEU THAI PHAM WITH AMY NELSON GREEN

"Just pack your bags and go!" is the advice Hieu Thai Pham, senior in Political Science/International Degree, would give anyone thinking about studying in China. "You'll find yourself in a very, very interesting world." Hieu spent last year in Beijing studying intensive language and learning about the people and politics of the country. He wanted to study in China because of its increasing role in international economic and political arenas. "China is going to be very important. We need to go there and try to understand the Chinese people better."

Hieu focused on language study during fall term and then added a half-time internship with the Vietnam News Agency in Beijing during winter and spring terms. The agency takes news reported from around the world and translates it into Vietnamese to be reported in Vietnam. Hieu translated articles from international newspapers and magazines, paying particular attention to stories related to international politics.

Hieu's internship gave him insight into China's relations with the U.S., Vietnam and other Asian countries. At times he found it difficult negotiating between three cultures. "They didn't want to hire me at first, but at the interview I tried to be a very good listener and tried to relate to them. It was difficult because I am a very open person, but sometimes I needed to tell myself to compromise more." Through his experiences at the agency, Hieu gained a better understanding of international relations in Asia and learned more about both the Chinese and Vietnamese perspectives on world events.

The biggest challenge Hieu faced in China was adjusting to the language when he first arrived. "It was really difficult at first, especially trying to buy something." Within a few weeks, however, he became accustomed to the currency and felt more comfortable using the language. By the end of fall term, he decided to travel alone to the southern city of Guangzhou by train. "It was scary at first, but everything worked out very well. It was a good chance to break away from the group."

Hieu intends to take advantage of his language skills and overseas experience to complete the International Degree in political science. Through his internship, he became very inter-



Hieu Pham (left) visits with a family in Xinjiang province during the Fall 1998 study tour.

ested in China's political relations with the U.S. and Vietnam and would like to focus his thesis topic in that area. He plans to graduate in the spring and hopes to find a job that will allow him to use his Chinese language skills. Among

the many rewards from his year in China, he considers the friendships he made with Chinese students as the most important. "I miss them a lot and we still keep in touch. It's something I am not going to forget."

Learning medicine...in two languages

Kyle, a pre-med senior double-majoring in Biochemistry/Biophysics and the International Degree, and a student in the University Honors College, spent summer term of 1998 in Ecuador, where he studied Spanish and also interned with an orthopedic surgeon. He reports that his stay in Ecuador gave him insights which he will carry with him into his medical training and practice here in the U.S. It also helped him choose a topic for his International Degree/Honors College thesis.

KYLE SHAVER

While in Ecuador, I definitely got a chance to interact completely with a different culture. I have worked with Spanish speaking patients here in Oregon, and my time in Ecuador convinced me that I would like to practice medicine in Spanish as well as English, and serve patients that speak both languages. Knowing a second language can be extremely comforting to patients if that is their native language.

"I learned also that medicine can still be practiced effectively with few technological tools and that a person's touch can sometimes be the best medicine."

KYLE SHAVER, SENIOR

I realized a couple more things during my trip. I discovered that people have many different expectations of doctors and what they can and should do for their patients. I learned also that medicine can still be practiced effectively with few technological tools and that a person's touch can sometimes be the best medicine.

The doctor that I worked with gave me a lot of direction for the beginning of my thesis. He suggested a topic that he knew about from both an Ecuadorian perspective and the perspective of a more developed nation. He was able to contrast the two very well so I could see drawbacks and benefits from both sides. I am still working on my thesis and I will definitely be in touch with him as it develops.



Kyle Shaver and mentor Dr. Marco Silva Romo.

A year in France positively affects all aspects of life

Genevieve Groen, a senior double-majoring in Business and the International Degree, spent 1998-99 in Poitiers, France.

GENEVIEVE GROEN

My first twenty-four hours in France were horrible! I asked myself many times, "What have I done?!" Just about everything that could have gone wrong did. In fact, had my time abroad been anything like my first day, I never would have survived. Fortunately, things rapidly improved! In a matter of days I was over my initial "culture shock." I realized that studying in France had been my long-time goal and I'd be crazy not to enjoy it to the fullest.

Now back in the U.S., I appreciate last year's experiences so much more than I'd ever imagined I would. Life overseas is much more relaxed. The French take time every day to have at least one meal with the entire family. It's a time that is unhurried and full of laughter and discussion. In Poitiers, I had the opportunity to experience these wonderful gatherings on several occasions.

I had a studio apartment, so I got most of my "French family" education from the wonderful French students I met or from our Director, Sylvie, and her family, who were like a "home away from home."

There is a huge misconception about French people and their "rudeness." Let me set the record straight; some of the best people I've ever met are French! Yes, you will find rude French citizens, but you can find rude U.S. citizens too. Overall, I really enjoyed the French people, from the people I passed on the street to the woman from whom I bought bread every day.

Obviously, mastering the language and understanding the cultural differences is a challenge. The French are very helpful. When I would make a mistake, almost automatically I'd be corrected with the proper grammar, pronunciation, whatever. Though the interruption was a bit aggravating at first, I finally realized that it wasn't done to annoy me, it was done to help me. I learned to appreciate and depend on this help.

I don't see how my study abroad experience could have been anything but positive. It has affected all aspects of my life. For my business and international degrees, the possibilities are endless! I have a second language and a year abroad experience behind me and as a result I have grown as an individual. I know I can handle just about anything and my confidence shows in all other areas of my life. Studying or working abroad is something I would recommend to everyone! It certainly is one of the best things I've ever done!



Genevieve Groen (right) visits fellow OSU students Randell Embertson and Heather Barklow in Vienna, Austria

Fall Information Meetings on International Opportunities

Snell Hall 448, 4-5 pm
(unless another room is listed)

Wednesday, Oct. 6	International Internships
Thursday, Oct. 14	China (term & year-long programs)
Tuesday, Oct. 19	In MU 206 - Austria, England, France, Ghana, Greece, Italy, Spain, Vietnam (term & semester-long programs)
Wednesday, Oct. 20	Thailand (term & year-long programs)
Thursday, Oct. 28	France, Lyon & Poitiers (year-long programs)
Wednesday, Nov. 3	Germany Baden-Württemberg (year-long program) Tübingen (spring term, language intensive)
Tuesday, Nov. 2	In MU 206 - Great Britain (year-long programs)
Tuesday, Nov. 9	Ecuador (term & year-long programs)
Wednesday, Nov. 10	Mexico (term & year-long programs)
Wednesday, Nov. 17	International Degree
Thursday, Nov. 18	Japan (year-long programs)

For more information about these study programs and additional stories from past student participants, please visit our website: osu.orst.edu/international/oie