



A NEWSLETTER ABOUT MSU STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Students head abroad for adventures in Northern Europe

Friends studying abroad together

Four Minot State University students recently headed to the nation famous for IKEA and meatballs to continue their studies and enhance their university experience. Brigitte Lafontaine, Shanda Guy, Mariah Geiger and Kari Olson, all natives of Minot, arrived in southern Sweden during the second week of January to start their exchange program at Högskolan i Kristianstad, one of MSU's international partner institutions. These four best friends have been inseparable since high school and the decision to study abroad as a group was always a goal. The girls were ecstatic to learn that MSU actually offered options that would allow them to live their dream of going abroad for a semester while remaining together.

"This is an experience we will go through together and share," Guy explained.

After a bit of research and several advising sessions with Bethany Keusch, Minot State University's global education coordinator, the girls decided that Kristianstad University (KU) was the perfect fit. Their studies at MSU are diverse, ranging from accounting and business management, to broadcasting and education. Yet, they are all able to take courses in Sweden that will apply to their graduation requirements, such as: topics in international business and business communication; internet publishing and web design; intercultural communication; Swedish history and Swedish language for international students. It was easy for the four of them to find plenty of options for classes as Kristianstad University offer a wide range of programs in English including computer science and technology, public health, environmental technology, and business economics.

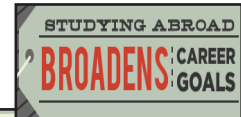
The exchange agreement between Minot State and Kristianstad University allows students from each institution to change places for one semester. Two KU students attended MSU during fall 2011, and thoroughly enjoyed their time in the Magic City.

Participating in an international exchange program in Sweden is an experience that the four friends are eager to try. They are understandably a little nervous though; on top of living and studying in another country, three of the four have never lived outside of their parents' homes, let alone in another culture and language. Nerves aside, they are savoring the opportunities that lie ahead. They are determined to take full advantage of what Sweden

has to offer by remaining open-minded and willing to adjust to a new way of life. As the girls see it, what better way to overcome potential challenges, while simultaneously having the experience of a life-time, than to have your best friends by your side?



From left to right: Shanda Guy, Kari Olson, Mariah Geiger, Brigitte Lafontaine, Jordan Lakoduk, John Towle and Brenden Bertrand.



STUDYING ABROAD IN COLLEGE can be an exciting opportunity to tour another country and immerse yourself in a culture much different than your own. However, studying abroad isn't cheap, especially depending on where you choose to travel. In your new country, you'll need money for classes, housing, food, transportation, and more.

Beyond the fun you'll have and the memories you'll make, is the cost of spending time in another country worth it in the long run?



Look for other facts and figures on the value of study abroad throughout this newsletter. Infographic taken from www.coursehero.com!

Scandinavia 2013: Capitals to the Fjords

MSU assistant professor of art and humanities, Dr. Andrea Donovan, is organizing a study tour that will take participants to four Nordic countries from June 21 to July 3, 2013. Along the way, participants will have the opportunity to learn about and discover a smorgasbord of Scandinavian delights. MSU students and other community members are invited to join this study tour to experience the capital cities of Scandinavia first-hand!

See Scandinavia capitals story continued on page 4.

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Student earns career opportunity through High North Fellowship

This spring semester, senior social work major, Brenden Bertrand, became the first Minot State University student to study at Høgskolen i Harstad (HiH) above the arctic circle, in northern Norway. MSU and Harstad University College became partner institutions early in 2011 and have so far focused collaborative projects in the fields of social work and special education.

Bertrand, a native of Carberry, Manitoba in Canada, applied for a grant through the MSU Office of International Programs to study in Harstad for the entire spring 2012 semester. The grant, called the High North Fellowship, was awarded to HiH by the Norwegian government for the purpose of jump-starting activities between the two institutions. Through this award, Harstad already funded a week-long academic visitation by four MSU students to Harstad last April 2011, and it will also provide funding for an additional MSU social work or special education student to complete their practicum and final semester of classes in Harstad next spring 2013.

Minot State University experienced a taste of Scandinavia in early October 2011. Representatives from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Finland gathered to discuss education, employment opportunities and strategies, healthcare systems and services and community living and support at the U.S.-Nordic International Conference on Intellectual Disabilities.

Several members from HiH also attended the conference and spent time getting to know Minot State. At that time, Bertrand had a chance to meet his practicum advisor at Harstad, Bjorn Erik.



Due to the specific parameters of the High North Fellowship, Bertrand's program is set-up a little differently than traditional study abroad programs. He will actually be taking three MSU social work classes through Interactive Video Networking (IVN) while in Harstad in order to complete the required courses for his degree. But the majority of his time abroad will be spent working in the local community at two schools, completing his practical field placement by working with children with disabilities, alongside other HiH social work students.

Bertrand is looking forward to learning about the field of social work in Norway and how it differs from the United States and Canada. As Bertrand explained, "I am definitely looking forward to doing my profession in another culture to see how things work over there, comparing them to how things work here... I want to see their techniques and how they go about things, especially with the theories they use."

Although he will miss walking across the MSU stage for graduation this May because his program will not end until early June, he feels that the learning experience is worth that sacrifice.

Follow Brenden's experiences in Harstad at his blog: brendenbertrand.blogspot.com/.

For additional information regarding the High North Fellowship opportunity to study in Harstad during spring 2013, Social Work and Special Education students can visit Bethany Stai Keusch, the Global Education Coordinator in the Office of International Programs.

Towle completing MSU degree while abroad

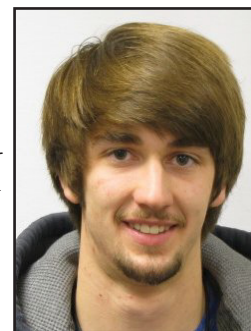
Minot State University senior and Helena, Montana native, John Towle, planned a grand finale for the culmination of his university experience by deciding to complete requirements for his triple major of International Business, Management, and Marketing while overseas. He recently began classes at the University of Chester in

England, through MSU's International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), where he is enrolled in several marketing and management courses, as well as participating in a worked-based learning placement

program (similar to an internship or practicum). Founded in 1839, the University of Chester has a total student population of around 14,000 students. The institution offers excellent teaching, study and recreational facilities, including a modern library and a range of sports and fitness opportunities. For Towle, the university not only offered the necessary academic options and amenities, but he also found the general location to be a perfect fit for his personal interests. The beautiful, medium-sized town (population of 120,000) is located in northwest England, only forty minutes from the larger cities of Liverpool and Manchester. Chester is actually considered to be one of Britain's top tourist centers; Roman walls, a magnificent Cathedral, and the world-famous Tudor 'Rows' (covered galleries of shops) can all be found within a short distance from campus.

Towle is eager to take advantage of all that the U.K. has to offer, as well as to have the opportunity to put into practice the business administration theories he learned throughout his education at Minot State University.

"I want to try and absorb all of the culture," said Towle. "I want to put meaning to my international business degree and understanding culture outside the U.S."



The first and primary impact that studying abroad makes on the lives of students is that it changes and broadens their post-college career goals.

IMPACT OF STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS ON STUDENT CAREER PLANS:



The most common career goal difference reported was a desire to consider working in another country.

See Towle's story continued on page 3.

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Towle's story continued from page 2.

The University of Chester offers the unique opportunity to develop skills and abilities through their work based learning program from students. While spending five weeks working for an organization, Towle will gain opportunities for a possible future career, gain expertise and experience in an occupation, can apply academic knowledge in a work setting, develop practical skills and enhance growing business knowledge.

Towle is most looking forward to meeting his new classmates, learning British phrases and slang, and becoming familiar with different cultural backgrounds he may come in contact with while outside of the U.S. After his program ends, he also plans to extend his stay in Europe with the hopes of attending the Euro 2012 football championship in Poland and the 2012 London Olympics.

Norwegian heritage motivates Minot native



Minot State University senior and Minot native, Jordon Lakoduk, started the New Year off by flying over Greenland and continuing on to neighboring Norway to start his Scandinavian exploration. Double majoring in marketing and management information systems, Lakoduk realized he wanted to study abroad in Norway when planning his last few semesters of his college career. Telemark University College (TUC), or Høgskolen i Telemark, quickly became his university of choice.

TUC is located in the rolling hills and mountains of the Telemark region in Norway and has been an MSU partner institution since 2007. Lakoduk is studying at the Bø campus, where the faculty of Arts and Sciences is situated. Student enrollment at this location is around 1,500, and a wide range of programs are offered- from business administration, computer science, sports, outdoor life, culture and the humanities.

Preparing for his program, Lakoduk, energetically tackled the task of learning the Norwegian language. He joined the Sons of Norway in Minot where basic Norwegian language classes are offered, listened frequently to podcasts in Norwegian, and met occasionally with a Norwegian woman in the Minot community to practice the language.

See Lakoduk's story continued on page 4.

Murcia, Spain program update

Readers of the Fall 2011 MSU Study Abroad Newsletter might recall being introduced to Kara Bohan, Minot State University student, who participated in a summer 2011 faculty-led program to London, Paris and Rome and who was also about to embark upon a year-long program to Murcia, Spain through ISEP (International Student Exchange Program). Bohan provided us with an update of her experience so far, when she temporarily returned to Minot for the winter break.

Seasoned travelers know that even the best laid plans can often go awry. Unfortunately, the start of Bohan's study abroad to Murcia, Spain fell in this category since she was delayed in Boston for a week due to Hurricane Irene's catastrophic visit to the East Coast. She missed the program orientation, half of the short-term introductory language course and registration assistance. But she was determined to remain flexible and keep a positive attitude despite the setbacks, and soon found that everything would work out. She finished her first semester at the University of Murcia with new friends, a new-found love of the Spanish culture and greatly improved Spanish language skills.

Bohan says that living in the middle of a European city like Murcia has been an exciting learning experience. When she walks out of her front door, she is immediately immersed in the Spanish culture, language and people. Her apartment building is located just a few blocks from her university classes, so on her walk to campus on the quaint cobblestone roads, she gets to take in skyscrapers, authentic Spanish tapas restaurants, the city centre and people playing instruments on the street.

One of Bohan's main goals for her time in Spain was to improve her language abilities. She also knew that this would prove to be one of the biggest challenges. She set the bar high for herself, and has already felt some rewards.

"I conquered a lot of my fears right away; speaking in front of people is one of my fears and then speaking in front of people in Spanish was even more of a fear," explained Bohan. "After I started trying, I felt so great! I never thought I'd do that in my whole life, and I did it and didn't throw up or anything, so I was happy."

During the adjustment from being away from home, Bohan has found an invaluable support system right at her doorstep. She was assigned an apartment with four other roommates who hail from different parts of the globe; in all, there are two Americans, a Brit and two students from the Dominican Republic. Bohan has been able to confide and connect with her roommates through culture shock, homesickness and language barriers, and has formed an especially strong bond with the student from England.

"I know when she is home, and we can go out and do something together; it makes it a lot easier when you have somebody else there who is going through the same situation."

Bohan is now completing the remainder of her program in Murcia, and she is looking forward to a fresh semester of classes beginning in February and to travel Europe during April.

"I am so excited for the second semester because I better know now what to expect," Bohan said. "I'm looking forward to traveling, my parents coming to visit, and I appreciate my experience a lot more."

Follow the rest of Kara's experiences in Murcia on her blog: karainmurcia.blogspot.com.



Bohan standing in a plaza near her apartment in Murcia.



FURTHERMORE, OVER 90 PERCENT of employers believe that students who have studied abroad are likely to possess other highly desirable skills, including:



- Cross-cultural communication skills
- Independence
- Cultural awareness
- Maturity
- Flexibility

Scandinavia capitals story continued from page 1.

The emphasis of this 3-credit humanities study tour is to delve into the art, architecture, literature and cultural heritage of Scandinavia. Each destination on the tour will include visits to, and lectures in, museums dedicated to local arts and culture, notable examples of architecture, famous sites relevant to writers and composers, and areas of historical interest. In addition, free time is built into the itinerary so that the program may be customized to the educational focus of each participant, while also allowing ample time to sample the foods and wares of the various destinations.

The program includes round-trip international airfare and transportation within Europe, breakfast and dinners on most days, accommodations, entrance fees, guided sightseeing and walking tours, and a 24-hour on-site tour director. The logistical aspects of the program are facilitated by Go Ahead Tours. Highlights of the itinerary are introduced below and a full schedule can be found at: www.goaheadtours.com.



Copenhagen

Denmark: The study tour will depart from Minot, arriving in Copenhagen for two and a half days taking in the landmarks and monuments in this bustling maritime city. On the evening of the third day, the group will board an overnight cruise ship to sail to Norway.

Norway: The tour group will spend two days exploring the famous fjords of western Norway. Activities during this portion of the program will include a visit to a medieval stave church for a glimpse into the traditional rustic lifestyle of the region, a fjord cruise, and a ride on the scenic Flam Railway—the steepest conventional

railway in the world. Participants will return to Oslo for a day of guided visits around the city and will depart the next day for Stockholm via a short flight.

Sweden: Sweden's sophisticated capital will be introduced by way of a guided tour that incorporates a stop in Stockholm's unique Town Hall, a tour of the museum housing the Vasa warship, and the Gamla Stan (Old Town)'s winding, medieval streets. The following day's schedule is left open, allowing the MSU study tour group to decide upon a customized site visit together. On the last night in



Stockholm

Sweden, the group will board a ship for an overnight voyage to Finland. Finland: The two-night stay in Helsinki begins with a city tour that passes by Senate Square, the Olympic Stadium, Tempelaaikio Church, and Sibelius Park. The final day of the program allows students to explore the downtown area independently, shop the seaside fish and fruit markets, or visit the National Museum with its famous ethnographic exhibits tracing Finnish culture.

One of the benefits of this particular program is that optional extensions would allow individual participants to extend their stay by travelling to either Estonia or Russia. These options can be discussed in greater length with the faculty leader.

Individuals interested in learning more, or submitting an application, should contact Dr. Donovan at: Andrea.Donovan@minotstateu.edu or (701)-858-3819.



Norwegian Fjord

Lakoduk's story continued from page 2.

While studying at TUC, Lakoduk is continuing his Norwegian studies by taking a course on the spoken and written language that he hopes will help him eventually master the language.

"I've always been fascinated by the culture, the language, the geography of the entire country, and I want to see where my ancestors are from," explained Lakoduk.

Lakoduk is also interested in learning as much as possible about international businesses and gaining "a greater understanding for how different cultures are, based on language and seeing exactly where I came from."

Minot's sister city, Skien, is located in the Telemark region, and Lakoduk cleverly sought to benefit from sister city connections by meeting with Norwegian business owners and officials from both Skien and Bø during the Nørsk Hostfest this past October. Through these connections, he has already arranged tours of several businesses in Telemark to get a first-hand view of how Norwegian companies are run and how they compare to their American counterparts.

During his time in Norway, Lakoduk also plans to take advantage of the proximity of other European countries by travelling to places such as Spain and Sweden. Follow Jordan's experiences in Bø at his blog: blog.jordanlakoduk.com.

**Look for the 2011
Winners from the
GLOBAL SIGHTS
PHOTO
CONTEST
on page 5.**

In celebration of International Education Week the Minot State University Office of International Programs organizes the "Global Sights Photography Competition" for MSU students, faculty, staff, retirees and alumni.

Faculty, Staff and Alumni Category

1st place: "Perspective" by Charissa Arneson in Recoleta Cemetery, Buenos Aires, Argentina from December 2010.



2nd place: "Venetian Canals" by Andrea Donovan in Venice, Italy from June 2011.



3rd place: "Which Way from Here" by Kyra Hansen in Cordoba, Spain from June 2009.

Student Category

1st place: "I think I'll just sit here" by McKenzie Rudolf in Marbella (Andalucia) Spain from October 2011.



2nd place: "Whitby" by Kayla Schmidt in Whitby, England from March 2011.

3rd place: "Life on the Fjord" by Jacey Peterson in Harstad, Norway from April 2011.

