



# C.I.I.P News



Fall 2013 Issue

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## This is Africa by Jade Romain



Before traveling to developing nations, family and friends always tell the traveler, "you will change their lives!" However, we never stop to realize how much our lives will be changed by the locals during the experience. Well, this trip I experienced that change. This summer I traveled to Zambia, Africa and taught pre-k and kindergarten for two and a half months at a community school called Blessed Vale.

Blessed Vale Community School is in the heart of Chibolya, which is one of the poorest compounds in Zambia. Community schools throughout Zambia are not funded by the government and cater to the most vulnerable children. They do not have inadequate educational materials but still choose to have an environment for children to learn. Nonetheless, my plans were to teach character development, however, when I arrived I realized that my class of sixty children did not speak English. They spoke the tribal languages of Zambia like Bemba, Tonga, and Nyanja. I freaked out! But, I did not give up and had to start from the basics.

Once we all adjusted, my babies and I were inseparable. Language barriers could not stop us from communicating with each other; I felt as if they were my own children. I worried when they had to dig in the compost piles to find food. I cried when they did not come to school on Mondays because they did not eat a meal all weekend and did not have the energy to walk to school. I got frustrated when I saw how many of them walked to school with no shoes and had scars all over their feet. But I smiled when I walked into the classroom every morning and saw all of their beautiful faces. My babies are rich in faith, spirit, and love. By the end of my trip, they knew their ABCs, 123s, shapes, and colors...all in English! They knew the sounds of the alphabet and knew how to identify the letters in some words. They were sharp on their feet and eager to learn. But, I learned a lot from them; they changed my life. **If you are interested in donating educational resources to community schools in Zambia, please contact Jade at: [jromain@xula.edu](mailto:jromain@xula.edu).**



*Ms. Romain, a Xavier Senior Speech Pathology major, reading to her students*

# Director's Message



Welcome to the fall 2013 edition of the Center for Intercultural and International Programs (CIIP) Newsletter. This fall is an exciting time for Xavier as we move forward on many initiatives in the ***Xavier University Internationalization Strategic Plan 2013-2018***. You can access this document on the Xavier website at [www.xula.edu/ciip](http://www.xula.edu/ciip).

First, in the spring and summer of 2013, Xavier students traveled all over the world to study. In this edition of the newsletter, Xavier students give you a glimpse of their experiences abroad. Students in both the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Pharmacy participated in study abroad programs. They studied in Costa Rica, Haiti, France, Dominican Republic, Spain, Cyprus, Zambia, England, Argentina, and China. They have returned to Xavier with an enhanced sense of global awareness and a comparative understanding of their area of study.

Throughout the fall semester, the returning study abroad ambassadors have shared their experiences in information sessions around the campus. In turn, CIIP advised them on marketing their study abroad experience to future employers and graduate and professional schools. On October 31st, CIIP and the Xavier study abroad ambassadors will hold an informational panel discussion for all students who are thinking about studying abroad.

Next, in the summer of 2013, Xavier faculty and staff facilitated student learning through study abroad. Xavier's Confucius Institute led a delegation of students to China to build upon their knowledge of the Chinese language and culture. The College of Pharmacy provided opportunities for Xavier students to conduct clinical rotations in Haiti. Also, the department of Theology facilitated a cultural program for students to go to Turkey and Greece. These three initiatives reflect the leadership of Xavier faculty and staff, in helping to provide multiple opportunities for students to develop their global awareness.

Faculty are expanding their "Xavier Abroad" initiatives with several faculty-led programs in the summer of 2014. Through these study abroad programs, Xavier students will be able to take two courses and earn up to eight credits. Students can sign up NOW for Professor Giti Farudi's Spanish Course in Costa Rica, Sister Mary Stachow's Theology course in Italy, Dr. Lourdes Rincon's cultural trip to Spain, or the Confucius Institute's cultural trip to China.

Finally, new initiatives have brought international students to Xavier. Through the Brazil Science Mobility Program, seven students are studying at Xavier for one year. We have our second student from Pakistan under U.S. State Department UGRAD Program. Additionally, Xavier welcomed a student from France for the academic year under the Louisiana MICEFA program.

In sum, CIIP remains steadfast in leading Xavier's Internationalization efforts through the ***Internationalization Strategic Plan 2013-2018***. As Xavier moves forward into the 21st Century, global learning must become one of the central components of its character and identity. Continued implementation of the plan, utilizing its multiple and varied experiences approach will move Xavier closer to meeting its mission. I hope that you enjoy the newsletter and we look forward to building on our campus internationalization initiatives.

Sincerely,

*Torian Lee*

Torian L. Lee, JD  
Director  
Center for Intercultural and International Programs

# Dr. Peters Builds on XU's Connection with China

By Richard Peters



*Dr. Peters with faculty from Hebei University*

This summer I was very fortunate to visit two very distinct and historical parts of the world, because of the very same reason; social responsibility. My first travels, in mid-May, took me to Baoding, China, home of Hebei University. Hebei is our Confucius Institute partner school, and while its name, and location might still be relatively unfamiliar to most on campus, we in the Division of Business sought to initiate and develop deeper ties with its faculty and students.

My ten days in Baoding were spent fostering these ties, through lecturing, dialogue, observation and cultural immersion. As stated in the beginning, the area of social responsibility provided an initial platform for me to engage faculty and students in China. I taught graduate students about social responsibility, especially from a western perspective, and discussed my research on the cultural implications of and to social responsibility with Hebei's business professors.

While my lectures and presentations kept me largely in the classroom, I was still able to visit and experience some of the many historic sites of China. I will always recall my trek up the majestic Great Wall and my strolls through Tiananmen Square or the Forbidden City. Despite the great explosion in infrastructure occurring throughout China currently, it is amazing how well the history and antiquity of the country is preserved.

These excursions notwithstanding, my most cherished memories are reserved for the people I met at Hebei. The faculty and students welcomed me unreservedly, which allowed us to share many great conversations, smiles, laughs and meals!! While in Nola, we're famous for our hospitality, Baoding, China and in particular, Hebei University, are not far behind. So to everyone there, Xie Xie !!

I felt this same warm hospitality and collegiality in Salzburg, Austria, during my visit in June. I was privileged to attend a Salzburg Global Seminar focused on Social Responsibility and Sustainability. Fifty of us, from multiple countries and professional callings (educators, congress people, ambassadors, government ministers, meteorologists), met over four days to discuss contemporary issues and create a plan of action to promote social responsibility and sustainability across the globe. While the hours were long, and the work intense, the passion, experience, intelligence and camaraderie shared by all in attendance made our time both notable and enjoyable. It didn't hurt either that we lived and worked in the historic Leopoldskron Schloss, a 16th century mansion made famous by the movie, the Sound of Music. Despite the rain, ( it almost never stopped over four days), the hills were truly alive!!

My trips were very different, but jointly reaffirmed one major principle; people are beautiful no matter where they're from.

Both these trips could not be undertaken without the assistance (both tangible and intangible) of CIIP. I am forever grateful and encourage more faculty members to get 'internationally' involved.



# Living Pura Vida

By Chrystina Clinton

My experience studying abroad in San Jose, Costa Rica was priceless. I learned so much about myself as well as about the Tican culture. I spent six weeks in San Jose living with a host family. This was a challenging yet life changing experience. The language difference was a shocker at first, but it was also something that I quickly overcame. The Costa Rican way of life is "Pura Vida," meaning pure life. While living with my host family I learned to breathe, relax, and not stress so much. I wouldn't trade this experience for anything in the world. Ticans are the nicest, most worry-free people I have ever met.

While in Costa Rica during our free weekends, we took many trips to various parts of the countryside. Being within the richness of the rain forests, diversity of tropical animals, beautiful beaches, and great people from all over the world was simply amazing. Living in a beautiful underdeveloped country full of some of the most wonderful people has given me a whole other perspective on the world and the many different cultures within. It also deepened my desire to reach my ultimate goal of being a doctor. I wouldn't trade this experience for anything in the world.



*Chrystina, a Xavier Biology major, zip-lines through the rainforest.*



*Chrystina Jumping off of a cliff.*



*Chrystina with other students on top of a mountain.*

# China: Voyage to the Far East

By Adina Ewing



I am delighted to have represented Xavier University and the Confucius Institute this summer in Boading, China. I have always had a passion for learning and understanding the languages, cultures, and social norms of other nations. Traveling abroad to China has definitely enhanced my already growing interest in global health. I hold a great passion for utilizing my pharmacy degree in the local minority communities and internationally.

As a future pharmacist, I am very interested in how medicine is practiced in other countries and I am fortunate enough to have gained some of that experience through my summer internship. During my stay at Hebei University, we visited a Chinese herbal hospital, where we learned about various natural medicinal practices, such as cupping, pulsing, and acupuncture. We also visited the herbal pharmacy, and saw how pharmacists prepare prescription medications. At the herbal market, we saw where the locals purchase their supplies for their herbal practices. There we discovered very interesting indications for different herbs. For example: how centipedes are useful for bug bites and infections.



*Adina on the Great Wall of China.*

Other expeditions included, visiting the Great Wall, Tiananmen Square, Han Dynasty tombs, and Yingqi Solar energy company just to name a few. We completed extensive Chinese language study every morning, along with cultural activities during the day. Those activities include, learning Taichi, calligraphy, tea culture, and many more!

This internship to China has been a great experience academically, personally, and professionally. It was great to have the opportunity to interact with other pharmacy students abroad. I would definitely encourage other students to get more involved. Xavier offers several opportunities for students to travel abroad, don't miss out!



*Adina in Tiananmen Square*



*Adina speaking to a Chinese local.*

# Studying Biology and Language in Costa Rica

By Chantel Bonner



The decision to study abroad was one that I made in high school during my beginning Spanish class. Being a Biology/premed major, many people tried to discourage me from completing the promise I had made to myself several years earlier. "It's dangerous," they said. "You won't be able to graduate with your class." After conducting my own research, I found these statements to be false. This information helped me to confirm my decision to travel to Costa Rica.

I was anxious as I made my journey from the U.S. to Latin America. I didn't know if I had made the right decision. All I knew was that I wanted to learn Spanish and that there was no better way to study it than being completely immersed in a Spanish speaking culture. From the moment my plane began its descent over the mountains and brightly colored roofs of San José, I knew I had made the right decision. I spent the next four months in paradise. I made friends with natives ("Ticos") and other students from the U. S. Many of these friendships are still strong to-day.

My classes were held at Veritas University. My typical week included 20 hours of Spanish, 4 hours of Tropical Biology, and 4 hours of Classical Biology. The courses were strenuous but not stressful. I learned so much new material. My host mom often commented on how much my Spanish had improved over a short period of time. By the end of my second month, I had no problem communicating with Ticos. A few even asked if I was Hispanic! This trip was most definitely the experience of a lifetime. To those of you who are thinking about making the life changing decision to study abroad I ask--- What are you waiting for?



Chanel in the rainforest.

