Global Scholars Share Research Projects

It was a day dedicated to scholarship, about using lamps to aid the development of monarch butterfly caterpillars to policies affecting advancing from primary to secondary education in selected African countries. The first cohort of Global Scholars culminated their experience with a symposium in the Kansas Union highlighting their research. Throughout the day, the students formed panels and presented their findings to an engaged audience.

The Global Scholars program recognizes and encourages undergraduate students who have an interest in global studies and a strong academic record. They are selected for their demonstrated interest in global and international studies, plans for studying abroad, and potential for continued high academic achievement and leadership.

Each student participates in a three-hour seminar taught during their sophomore year and is paired with a faculty mentor with similar interests during their undergraduate studies. Two other cohorts are currently participating in the program.

The program includes a $1,000 study abroad scholarship. Scholars studied abroad in the United States, Europe, South and Central America and Africa. The slideshow during the symposium highlighted their travels.

For some, the study abroad experience was pivotal to their research project. Jeff Miller spent time at La Sala in San Jose, Costa Rica, an organization that offers sex workers resources and works as a collective. Miller learned how to gather information and find out what was really happening.

“Keep showing up; keep being there. Piece together the differences between what’s said and what’s done,” Miller said.

“The Global Scholars Symposium was a wonderful showcase of some of the best and brightest student scholars at KU. The students all gave wonderful presentations, did a fine job completing their scholarship and described with great insight the impact that study abroad had on their KU experience,” said John Augusto, director of the Center for Undergraduate Research.
AEC Short-Term Programs Continue to Grow

The Applied English Center’s (AEC) portfolio of short-term programs started small and has grown to 12 programs a year. One example of this growth, in spring 2002, the AEC hosted 2 short-term programs with 31 students. In spring 2013, the AEC hosted 8 programs with an enrollment of 103 students. From applying for a program to acclimating groups to KU, Margaret Coffey, Geri Lamer, Aaron Huerter, Tiffany Edwards and Marie Osterhaus, the newest short-term program staff member, work together to meet both the requests of the participants’ home institutions and the needs of the students.

The AEC has been approached by entities including the Institute of International Education, American Councils, and international universities to apply for programs to bring students to campus for language and cultural skills programs. Coffey writes proposals with Huerter and Lamer’s help. If the proposal is accepted, then Coffey begins negotiations with the sponsor that become an agreement. No two programs are alike, so designing programs to fit the academic and cultural requirements of the sponsoring institution and what the AEC is able to offer involves considerable preparation. The 35-page agreement with Kansai University in Japan, for example, covers everything the students do while they are on campus.

This spring was the AEC’s busiest semester, with the greatest number of programs in last 11 years. Chinese teachers from Xi’an Technological University, undergraduate students from Kanagawa University in Japan, 3 University of Costa Rica (UCR) professors, 3 students in a new Fulbright-Afghanistan program, and participants in the English Language Certificate Program for High School English Teachers from Brazil were on campus at the same time in the spring semester.

“Three of those programs arrived on the same day in January within 45 minutes of each other. One group arrived with a critically sick person who needed to go to the hospital as soon as she got to Lawrence,” Huerter said.

Good relationships on campus are crucial to the programs’ success. “Geri Lamer has done an incredible job in this area,” Coffey said. Participants arrive after established university deadlines, so the Watkins Health Center, the Department of Student Housing and International Student Services are just three of the “hundreds of little pieces” that come together to establish the participants on campus.

Short-term programs require flexibility from Applied English Center staff. Students join AEC classes already in progress, or some programs have classes developed for them. AEC teachers are adaptable and very welcoming to late-arriving students. “They take on a lot and I am very grateful to them,” Coffey said.

Learning about the United States is an important part of the programs. Students take field trips and spend time with local families. When asked what they would like for the short-term programs if increased resources and opportunities became available, Lamer said she would like to include more cultural experiences and establish additional connections to the Lawrence community.
Five Questions with Andrew Short

KU research scientist Andrew Short studies the diversity, biology and evolutionary history of aquatic beetles for entomology at the KU Biodiversity Institute and is an assistant professor in ecology and evolutionary biology.

How did you become interested in beetles?

I started collecting insects when I was 11 and my interest never really waned. I also played in streams a lot when I was a kid. While I was an undergraduate at the University of Delaware, those interests fused and I started studying aquatic beetles—now I could collect insects and splash around in streams at the same time! Like many insect groups, we know so little about where they live and what they do and the thought of making discoveries excited me.

Why is it important to you to involve students and visiting international scholars in your research?

Traveling abroad is one of the single most life-changing (or view-changing) experiences one can have, particularly to less developed or non-western countries. I was fortunate to spend a month in Costa Rica while I was a sophomore with the Department of Entomology at UD. I try to enable others to have that kind of experience whenever possible.

With much of my fieldwork occurring outside the US, building meaningful, long-term collaborations with local institutions and researchers in the countries in which I work is is not just important but essential. My current work in South America has a strong capacity-building component—that is, to provide resources and training to in-country personnel such that they can continue the research on their own. I have hosted visiting students and scholars from 8 countries, enabling them to take advantage of KU’s excellent entomology resources.

If you have a list for projects/discoveries/fieldwork you’d like to undertake, what’s on it?

The Guiana Shield (an ancient region of northeastern South America) has been an increasing focus of my fieldwork in recent years, and I’m hoping to expand my work into Guyana and northern Brazil in the near future. In August, I’ll be leading a team funded by National Geographic to an isolated table mountain (also called tepuis) in Suriname that I am very excited about. I’d love to work along the upper Orinoco River in southern Venezuela one day.

What’s the strangest experience you’ve had in the field?

I also once saw a Kansas state flag flying at a gas station in rural eastern Suriname... I have no explanation.

What advice do you have for students interested in entomology?

They should seek out a faculty member working in entomology and talk with that person about their interests. KU has several introductory and advanced classes on insects, and we are fortunately to have a number of entomology faculty in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and the Natural History Museum. We also have weekly “bug lunches” where we get together as a group to talk insects.
Balaji Bhaskar knows the exact time and day that his life changed. At 4:56 a.m., March 17, 2009, the KU senior from India received an email stating that the university had awarded him a full scholarship.

His life’s trajectory from that moment led to his post-graduation position at Microsoft. An avid user of Microsoft software, Bhaskar has always wanted to work for the Seattle-based company.

Bhaskar’s interest in computer science drew him to KU. In addition to a strong Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and the scholarship, he thought that “the KU culture would be amazing.” Knowing that the department produced people like Google Earth designer Brian McClendon also influenced his decision.

Four years later, Bhaskar knows he made the right choice. His computer classes created a strong foundation for his success.

“If it weren’t for KU, none of this would have happened,” he said.

A summer internship on the Microsoft Business Intelligence team led to his full-time position as a software developer. After applying online, he had a phone interview while walking on Jayhawk Boulevard, then flew to Seattle for five back-to-back interviews. He was one of 600 interns out of 100,000 applicants. He cannot divulge what he worked on or will work on when he begins in August. KU is now on Microsoft’s radar. The company started visiting the campus to look for future talent, after Bhaskar’s successful internship.

Bhaskar spent part of his senior year serving as a School of Engineering ambassador. Ambassadors talk with visitors, especially prospective students, about the school and participate in events.

“‘We are so happy for Balaji and all the great things he is accomplishing. His successes paired with a fantastic personality are the reasons he was selected to be one of our Engineering Ambassadors. We think that prospective students will be excited about the things he’s been able to achieve here and will hopefully inspire them to attend KU as well,’” said Alexis Jones, assistant dean for Recruitment and Retention in the School of Engineering.

Balaji Bhaskar

Gift Information
I/We would like to make a gift of:
$_________ in support of International Programs (36379)
Gift is from:

Email: __________________________
Phone number __________________________

Your gift to KU Endowment can be enhanced through employer matching gift programs. Contact your personnel office to find out if your employer will match your gift.

Giving options
Please make check payable to KU Endowment
Check the appropriate credit card
☑ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express
☐ Discover
Credit card# __________________________
Exp. date ______ ______
Signature __________________________

Give securely online: www.kuendowment.org/givenow

Company __________________________
Spouse’s Company __________________________

Match Gift

Procedure: ☐ Form enclosed
Hoang Leads by Example

Dat Hoang’s picture is on the bedroom wall of at least one KU international student. The junior from Vietnam learned this when he was recognized at the new international student orientation by his photo on Department of Housing’s International Life brochure. Hoang is an excellent example of an international student who created his place at KU.

Hoang is known on campus for his enthusiasm and involvement. The economics major’s list of campus activities and accomplishments includes various leadership positions including president for Grace Pearson Scholarship Hall, orientation leader at four international student orientations, multiple scholarships recipient and International Student Association social chair.

Being an orientation leader was his “favorite job of all time.” Being able to share what he has learned about life in the United State and at KU, “is an important office for international students,” he said.

“This year, we hosted a karaoke night at the Casbah downtown. Students had the opportunity to explore the beautiful downtown in Lawrence and show off their voices. At one point, we had more than 30 people sharing three microphones on the stage, and we set the new record for attendance,” Hoang said.

Hoang shared his KU experience virtually when he talked with prospective students last spring during a College Line Virtual Fair.

Hoang spent his senior year of high school in Wellington, Kan., where he decided to go to KU, “the best school in Kansas.”

Time management is Hoang’s key to managing academics, scholarship hall responsibilities and extracurricular activities. To keep having new experiences, Hoang has applied to be a resident assistant next year.

“If you want to be successful, you need to focus on a lot of things and spend your time wisely. Study, play and live are my three favorite words,” he said.

“Dat has been one of the most successful and enthusiastic international undergraduates. His involvement has included leadership as ISS orientation leader, president of his scholarship hall and he has assisted us multiple times in promotional and recruitment activities. He is so loyal and happy to be part of the KU community,” said Daphne Johnston, associate director, International Recruitment and Undergraduate Admissions.

Horizons Editor: Alison Watkins

www.international.ku.edu
Six University of Kansas students immersed themselves in printmaking for two weeks this semester. Accompanied by Associate Professor Michael Krueger, the art students participated in a selective professional printmaking workshop at the Frans Masereel Centrum (FMC) in Belgium.

FMC is an artist-in-residence program subsidized by the Flemish government in rural Kasterlee. Krueger applied for the program with Professor Michael Barnes from Northern Illinois University, who took students for the workshop. Krueger said KU’s selection was “quite a coup” as it was only the third American school to be chosen.

Prior to the workshop, the graduate and undergraduate students learned about the history of Belgium printmaking and developed their projects in the Advanced Printmaking seminar, which they continued at the FMC. While there, Krueger and Barnes conducted workshops in different printmaking techniques. Artists in residence at the FMC gave two lectures to the group.

“Getting to work side by side with faculty and students from both KU and Northern Illinois was especially meaningful, allowing for open discussion, collaboration and sharing of ideas,” said graduate student Greg Stone.

The students worked at the center for four days a week and traveled on the weekends. “We soaked up every museum we could find. . . . This was one of the best experiences of art that I ever had,” Krueger said.

After being inspired by what they saw in the museums, “to be able to go back to the center to make art was a luxury,” Krueger said. This was most of the students’ first trip to Europe, so they acquired a global perspective and saw art that they would not be able to view in the United States.

This was Krueger’s second study abroad program. For five years, he led a program to Italy.
Serendipity led John Clune to Ghana. A chance meeting at a KU lunch with a military officer from Ghana helped the doctoral history student organize a summer 2012 research trip to Ghana.

Clune, a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, is in the three-year fast-track program to receive a doctoral degree specializing in U.S.-African relations. When the 18-year veteran pilot graduates in the summer of 2014, he will return to the Department of History at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs as an assistant professor.

KU hosts an annual workshop for the participants in the Ft. Leavenworth International Officers Program, which includes a lunch for the officers and invited KU students. Sitting next to Major John Danso-Ankrah led to a conversation about his dissertation topic, Ghanaian military exchanges with the United States. “I told him I was studying him 20 years earlier,” Clune said.

“I’m interested in how individual relationships form the basis of large organizations’ mutual influence,” he said.

He needed introductions and someone to help him get access to military bases, and Danso-Ankrah said he would be glad to help. This conversation motivated Clune to take a three-week research trip last summer.

Clune encountered a scholar’s worst nightmare, a dearth of primary sources. He had minimal success at the Ghanaian national archives. Danso-Ankrah’s name helped him gain access to the national staff college, army headquarters, and the armed forces’ director of public relations, where he found some data. Many records were lost or had been destroyed, he said. Ghanaian military records are in English, which made his work easier.

“I had mixed success. I got to go to different places and made contacts along the way,” Clune said.

This February Clune attended the same luncheon and met the nephew of the head of the Ghana Air Force Public Relations Division. Their conversation led Clune to hope that his new acquaintance can help him track down the missing documents.

“Things happen and fall into place,” he said.