A Trip Around the World

By Rose Saville-Iksic, Graduate Assistant ISS

Save the date! Wednesday, April 6, 2016 at 5:30 pm in the Terrace Room, A Trip Around the World cultural showcase will be open to the entire Bucknell community. International and domestic students alike will highlight a country of their choosing with international food and creative, interactive displays of the culture. We are expecting at least 20 countries from across the globe to be represented!

A Trip Around the World is a massive event, usually involving upwards of 50 student volunteers and covering 20 to 30 countries. The Office of International Student Services (ISS) organizes the event with the help of student volunteers and has already begun planning what will be the 4th event of its kind. It is not too early to sign up either (see link below). A few weeks ago, on November 18th several interested students attended the first information session to start brainstorming creative ideas to share their cultures. Ideas ranged from showing off traditional attire, a cultural trivia game with prizes, a comparative display exhibiting the difference between family life in Nepal versus the USA, a traditional Chinese dance lesson, a Nigerian dance performance, and so much more. There is no limit to the creative opportunities.

Students can already sign up to be an Ambassador for their country of choice at this link, http://goo.gl/forms/VOFwwQ7iy3. All you need to do is list your country of interest and decide which poster theme best aligns with your showcase ideas. There are three categories to choose from: Global Awareness, Global Perspectives, and Global Engagement. The first one, Global Engagement refers to students who want to present a cause or social issue faced by their country. Global Perspectives refers to students who are interested in highlighting different perspectives. This could include comparing perspectives of various people groups within a country or comparing one culture to another around a central theme (like the example for Nepal above). Global Awareness is the broadest of the three categories and can accommodate any ideas that do not fit into the other two! Early registrants will have the chance to apply to present a special interactive Spotlight Session during which time they will host a performance, interactive activity, or other special “spotlight” on their country. A handful of Spotlight Sessions will fill out the event to make this trip around the world a trip to remember!

If you are interested in volunteering to host a country sign up today. Feel free to email me with any questions at rasi001@bucknell.edu and know that group work is welcome! So, it is not only on you to create a beautiful and engaging table display; you have help!
Study Abroad in France and Jordan

By Polly Englot ’16

I love Bucknell dearly, but choosing to leave campus for a year was one of the best decisions I ever made. I’m a senior now, majoring in Geography and minoring in Arabic and French, and the programs I chose reflected my academic and personal interests. I studied abroad for my entire junior year: I was in Amman, Jordan for Fall 2014, and Tours, France for Spring 2015. The experience wasn’t always easy, but the knowledge and experiences I gained were undeniably worth it.

For my Fall semester I studied with the Language and Culture program from the Council on International Education Exchange (CIEE). Coming from Bucknell’s tiny Arabic program (we have a minor but only two professors, and probably under fifty students, total) it was exciting to have 100 Arabic students in my section of the program alone. I enjoyed meeting students from American universities around the country who had similar interests and passions to me, as many Arabic students are interested in politics and international relations. Studying abroad anywhere is challenging—it’s hard to leave family and friends behind, and to live in another country—and Jordan was a particularly challenging place to start. I made great friendships, though, and pushing my comfort zone made me braver and more open.

Based on my experience, and what I’ve heard from other students, the first semester abroad is the hardest. That’s one of the reasons that many students wish they could study abroad for an additional semester, or even decide last minute to go abroad again. So after finishing my first semester—which was harder because it was the first semester, because my Arabic level is much lower than my French, and because Jordan is much more different from the United States than France—I was ready and so very excited for studying with Bucknell en France. It was comforting to be with Bucknell students again, I loved growing more comfortable in my grandmother’s native country, and Tours was a joy to live in.

I cannot encourage students to study abroad enough. Bucknell is a wonderful place, but you can learn and grow in amazing ways if you spend even just a few weeks studying outside of Lewisburg. Studying abroad, in whatever form, is different from just a touristic visit because of the mindset the “studying” puts you in, as well the eye-opening little things you learn when you live somewhere. The experience can even connect you more with other Bucknellians, whether they’re in your program, or even the director of it—the director of my program, Dr. Elena Corbett, was a Bucknellian, and she was definitely an inspiring alumna to meet. So study abroad! Talk to your department chair, your advisor, the Office of Global and Off-Campus Education, and other students who have studied abroad. I promise that you won’t regret the experience.

Contact globaled@bucknell.edu for more information about how you can apply for a study abroad program.
Service Trip in New Orleans

By Rahul Raj Dhakal ‘16

As I was driven from the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport to Camp Hope—our resting place, I remember thinking—‘Wow, this place does not look like it was hit by a major hurricane at any point.’ My mental image of New Orleans was quite different and so were my expectations from the trip. But New Orleans kept surprising me with its beauty, hospitality and resiliency to the point where I was deeply humbled and inspired. And of course, being the motherland of Jazz, music was a treat coming from every street, and Crepes from the French Quarter were to die for. The first two days of being a tourist had almost made me forget the original purpose of visit; but it didn’t take me long to see past the flashy French Quarter, and concentrate on St. Bernard Parish—the place most affected by Katrina and that is still struggling to house the people who were once residents. Throughout the trip, the theme of ‘home’ kept coming up, whether from the trip leader, trip fellows or the locals. It made me think what home really means to me, and I tried to comprehend how not having it for more than a decade could be like. Taking that first step towards giving a home to a real person in real need was a powerful feeling and I was glad that I chose to be there during Thanksgiving. I recommend every Bucknellian to experience New Orleans culture, people and KRT is an excellent source to do that.

* Bucknell hosts two Katrina Recovery Trips “KRT” each year to help rebuild affected communities in New Orleans - contact the Office of Civic Engagement for more info at 577-3973)
SASA Dinner

Hosted by South Asian Student Association, the annual SASA dinner celebrates the greatest festival of the Hindu people, known as ‘Diwali’. The main theme of the event this year was ‘travel’, and the performers took the audiences around different countries in Asia. There were performances, food, dancing, and a little taste of South Asian culture.

Photo credit: SASA members

BASA Bash

BASA Bash, organized by Bucknell’s Africa Student Association held their biggest event of the year on November 14th. This year’s theme was Many Faces, One Continent - that challenged the misconceptions that people have about what it means to be African. There was a lot to experience... from spoken word, to art, discussion, dancing and food.

Photo credit: BASA members

Made In Asia

Organized by Students for Asian Awareness in Bucknell, the purpose of this event was to introduce and showcase the different Asian communities we have on campus. This event was expo-like where each table had information about different cultures in Asia. At each table, students were dressed in traditional clothing and shared about their culture, allowing other students to learn and also have a chance to write their name in calligraphy of that language.

Photo credit: Dechen Yangkyi
Madame Presidenta: Why not US?

By Sophie Bromand ’17

On Thursday November 19, 2015, as part of the Global Women’s Film Series*, the 2013 film “Madame Presidenta: Why not U.S.?” was screened in the Gallery Theatre at Bucknell. This film tells the story of a woman’s journey to Brazil to explore the key question of why so many countries have elected a female head of government before the United States. Heather Arnet, Chief Strategic Officer of the Women and Girls Foundation and filmmaker, traveled to Brazil where Brazilians had recently elected their first female president. She spoke to women from all walks of life, capturing their stories and reflections on the transforming gender roles in politics and economics in Brazil. Madame Presidenta explores the differences between the political and social environments of the U.S. and Brazil. What does it take to achieve gender equality within a political structure? To see women as viable candidates for head of state? More than 50 fifty women have run unsuccessfully for the U.S. presidency, yet across the globe nearly 1 in 4 countries has elected a female head of state or government.

In Brazil, just two years after Hillary Clinton “put 18 million cracks in the American glass ceiling”, Dilma Vana Rousseff was sworn in as Brazil’s 36th President. One explanation, which Arnet’s friend provides, is that Brazil was simply “prepared for this”. She said that several political, economic and social aspects played a huge role in the outcome of the election, but more importantly “Dilma is there because we as a country chose to put her there.” To have women in political spheres is a crucial part of the puzzle when talking about gender equality and women’s empowerment. And it seems like Brazil figured it out and came together to elect their first ‘Madame Presidenta’.

In her youth, Dilma Rousseff was an activist for women’s rights, and fought in the forefront as a member of the Clandestine Movement against the military dictatorship in the late 1960’s. Dilma was captured, arrested and tortured in 1970 and sentenced to jail. After three years, she was released and was even more determined to change the political culture of Brazil. Dilma’s presidential campaign meant for Brazilian women and girls that the impossible was made possible and the message of “See everybody, a woman can be President!”, was a political game-changer in Brazil. A change in a longstanding patriarchal political structure is not easy, but as we have seen world-wide, it is possible. And for Brazil, having been able to elect their first Madame Presidenta, is definitely a great indication that the Brazilian people seeking a paradigm change.

So the only question left unanswered is: when will the United States be ready? I guess we may see at the next Presidential election.

¡Vamos Meninas!

http://wgfpa.org/vamos-meninas-2/

*Sponsored by the Women’s Resource Center and International Student Services
Good Luck with the Finals!!!