Global Perspectives

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Building partnerships and capacity in Tanzania

While Ohio State is building collaborative partnerships all over the world, the university is also leading focused, growing collaborative efforts in Tanzania. Ohio State is the lead university working with five other land-grant university partners — the University of Florida, Iowa State University, Michigan State University, Tuskegee University and Virginia Tech — in the Innovative Agricultural Research Initiative (iAGRI) project, dedicated to improving Tanzania’s food security and agricultural productivity. Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and led in Tanzania by Ohio State’s David Kraybill, iAGRI is also part of Feed the Future, the U.S. government’s global hunger and food security initiative.

The focus of the project is on capacity building with Sokoine

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University of Agriculture in Morogoro, Tanzania, as well as the country’s Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives. The Ohio State-led consortium of U.S. universities will participate in all the capacity building activities including, degree training, workshops, collaborative research, seminars and other activities that enhance capacity of the Tanzanian partner institutions.

On the Ohio State campus the iAGRI is administered by the International Programs in Agriculture Office in the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. The project will support Tanzanians for degree training at U.S. partner universities, providing agricultural degree training for as many as 100 Tanzanian graduate students through 2016. Half of these students will be trained at Ohio State or other U.S. partner institutions, while half will be placed locally at the Sokoine University of Agriculture and other universities in east and southern Africa. In the first two years of the program, nine Tanzanians were enrolled in advanced degree programs in Ohio State College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, and candidates for autumn 2013 are currently under review.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) training is an aspect spanning the distance between Ohio and Tanzania. In February 2012, 43 Tanzanian students received training for the GRE — required to enter graduate school in the U.S. — as well as the Test of English as a Foreign Language. The training was actually broadcast live from the Ohio State campus, and participants were able to interact remotely with workshop leaders. Training participants earned significantly higher exam scores than other Tanzanian students, leading to a higher rate of success in placing the students at U.S. universities.

In August 2012, iAGRI and Ohio State sponsored a five-day workshop on research methods for the social sciences on the Sokoine University of Agriculture campus. Ohio State’s Stanley Thompson, a professor in the Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics, led 40 participants as they studied how to identify problems, develop research hypotheses, collect and analyze data, manage statistical inference, communicate results and more.

To bolster agricultural research, iAGRI also administers a competitive grant program, in which Tanzanian agricultural researchers submit proposals to work on two-year projects with counterparts at one of the six partnering universities in the U.S.

Ohio State’s leadership of iAGRI allows the university to share its diverse resources and perspectives while developing and nurturing long-term relationships between agricultural educators in Ohio and Tanzania.
The international student population at Ohio State has risen dramatically in the last five years and we have more than 6,000 international students currently enrolled. We are fortunate that so many international students place a high value on our academic programs as well as the first class facilities that reside on our campus. With this growth in the number of international students, the university recognized the need to enhance and expand programs and services specifically for this population and to create additional opportunities for students and faculty to become more globally aware. The $500 fee initiated autumn semester for all new international undergraduate students will support high impact programs and activities that will be of great benefit to international students and the university population as a whole.

The Office of International Affairs has been charged with stewarding funds generated from the fee and is already working with student support services and academic programs across campus to conduct a needs analysis and design a robust set of new and expanded programs as well as broadly investing in the internationalization of Ohio State. While still in the early discussion stages, there are plans to implement a wide variety of programming including a summer prep program, a summer term intensive English language class, pre-departure orientations in Ohio State Gateway locations, expanded study abroad opportunities, support for international research, technology enhancements and a host of other ideas.

Programs and services that are implemented will undergo an evaluation process to measure their impact and value. We want to ensure that the opportunities we provide not only support our international students but enrich their experience at Ohio State.
Keith and Linda Monda commit additional $5 million to study abroad scholarships

Ohio State alumnus and Foundation Board Director Keith Monda and his wife, Linda, have committed an additional $5 million to The Ohio State University College of Arts and Sciences. This gift supplements the Keith and Linda Monda International Experience Scholarships, which they created with a gift of $5 million in November 2011, bringing their total support for the scholarship to $10 million.

“I believe that a worldview is critical to success. Our objective was to do a little bit to level the playing field, to make sure that everybody who has an interest in understanding the broader world has the opportunity to do that,” said Monda, who serves as chair of the College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Committee, as well as campaign chair of the College of Arts and Sciences Capital Campaign at Ohio State. “If you look around this troubled world that we live in, maybe some of the problems wouldn’t be as extreme if people at least understood the other individual’s point of view.”

Within four years, the Mondas’ initial commitment will provide — annually and in perpetuity — 50 arts and sciences students with funds to participate in an international experience. When realized, the additional $5 million commitment, an estate gift, is expected to roughly double this number of students.

Monda, who earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in economics at Ohio State, retired in 2008 as president of Coach, Inc. “Ohio State was a critical element in creating the Keith Monda I wanted to be;
that success has permitted Linda and me to give back and, hopefully, make the world a little bit of a better place.”

Providing the opportunity to study and experience first-hand the variety of viewpoints, cultures and languages outside of the United States is an important goal for Ohio State, according to Joseph Steinmetz, executive dean and vice provost for the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Keith and Linda have dedicated their lives to finding ways to make education and educational experiences accessible and affordable to all persons,” said Steinmetz. “Their extraordinary generosity will ensure that a vital part of a student’s education, the experience of studying abroad, will become a reality for many of our students who do not have the means to experience education and life in another country.”

The average study abroad experience costs $5,000-$7,000, making it for many students a difficult activity to participate in without scholarship support. Monda scholarships are expected to average $6,000 per student to pay for travel, housing, program fees and other costs associated with living and studying in a foreign country.

**Global Gateways facilitate faculty research, networking abroad**

Ohio State’s Global Gateway offices in Shanghai, China and Mumbai, India both serve as a base for faculty research, teaching and international collaboration, and are also available to coordinate Ohio State faculty visits abroad—a service that has helped a growing number of faculty make connections in Gateway countries.
Stephen Povoski, associate professor in the College of Medicine, recently researched methods of early cancer detection in Hefei, Shanghai and Chongqing. The China Gateway staff accompanied Povoski to Philips Health Care in Shanghai, as well as facilitated visits with Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Hospital and the Zhejiang Hospital of Traditional Medicine.

Faculty members traveling to China or India are encouraged to notify the appropriate Gateway director (Phoebe You in Shanghai or Ratnesh Bhattacharya in Mumbai) of their impending visit. The staff at the Gateway offices can help Ohio State faculty by facilitating focused networking, targeted recruitment and support for scholarly work abroad. The Gateways can also help identify accommodations and can provide recommendations and general wayfinding.

While China and India are the initial two countries to boast Gateway offices, Ohio State is investigating future offices in Brazil, Turkey, sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. For more information, visit oia.osu.edu/global-gateways.

You protects, participates in rural traditions
dissertation in China, Ziying You, a PhD candidate in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, had planned to meet a local official at the Niuwang Miaow (Ox King Temple). “I went there very late,” she said, “and found the old Niuwang Temple was completely ruined, with only bricks and sand left on the ground ... I could not believe what I saw.”

She had visited the standing temple in Beiyang village only the week before, and knew that the structure – built in 1014, destroyed in 1940, rebuilt in 2000 and renovated in 2004 – was due to be protected by the local government. “I did not know what ‘protection’ meant until I stood on the ruins of the temple,” she said, “but what they decided to do was dismantle the old temple, and build a brand-new one ... I did not know what was really lost, but what was lost seemed very essential to me.” Looking at the place where the temple had stood, You hoped that she could do her part to protect local tradition through her ongoing research.

Supported by an Office of International Affairs Grant, You traveled to China in 2012 to study tradition in Hongdong County, Shanxi Province. “Local people there have maintained living traditions about Yao and Shun, two brilliant kings during the Golden Age of Chinese preliterate history,” said You. The people of Hongdong have continued to hold temple festivals and perform rituals worshiping Yao and Shun for thousands of years, providing a rich living history of tradition to study.

You’s dissertation will trace how tradition is understood, practiced and protected in contemporary China. “Instead of investigating the general usage and intellectual construction of the term ‘tradition,’ I focus on how Chinese rural people in a village in northern China conceive and practice their folk traditions in everyday life,” she said. During her fieldwork, she lived with local families, participating in these traditions, as well as the families’ daily lives. She also recorded hundreds of hours of interviews with people from villages throughout Hongdong County, to understand how they thought about their traditions.

“My core question is not simply about who owns tradition, or how it is conceived locally,” You said. “I am interested in how tradition can be transmitted and promoted respectfully.” She approached her dissertation with a number of questions: “How do they differentiate different folk groups and social agencies in their community? How do they view themselves? How do they represent social change in their lives?” You’s fieldwork allowed her to understand her questions more clearly, as well as to explore the answers she received in greater depth.
In working to shed light on the transmission of tradition in rural Shanxi, You had to conduct her research in Shanxi, exploring how people interact with each other, with temples, with local institutions, and how these groups cooperate to preserve local tradition. Looking at the practical, rather than intellectual, understanding of tradition demanded an in-person experience, which You was able to facilitate with help from the Office of International Affairs.

“If I had not got the OIA grant to conduct my fieldwork in Hongdong, Shanxi, China,” said You, “I would not have shaped my dissertation … there would be no in-depth dissertation topic for me had I not conducted research in China.”

Gateway grant provides a global classroom for graduate students

In 2012, Annie Bergelin submitted a proposal to research the urban waterfront in Rotterdam, in the Netherlands – home to the fourth largest port in the world, and the primary port for all of Europe. Buoyed by the Global Gateway Grant and the Knowlton School of Architecture Research Travel Grant, Bergelin was able to study how the city of Rotterdam balances urban waterfront development for various uses, including real estate development and ecological functions.

"In my life, I have found that traveling can be a more comprehensive means for learning than a traditional classroom setting, and as a
Master of Landscape Architecture student, it is valuable for me to have opportunities to experience designed landscapes all over the world,” Bergelin said. “In the past 30 years or so, there has been a renaissance in the relationship between cities and their waterfronts – revitalizing urban waterfronts is a recent phenomenon for many cities in the U.S., but the Netherlands has always been very aware of their relationship with the water.” Bergelin spent four weeks exploring the city and surrounding area to develop her own understanding of this relationship.

Bergelin found that this hands-on waterfront research revealed a great deal about the cultural differences between design in the Netherlands and what she has practiced in the U.S. “The cultural differences between my conception of urban waterfront and the prevalent waterfront design in Rotterdam was unexpected,” she said. “For example, at a waterfront site in Rotterdam I might question why there are so few landscape amenities. Yet a deeper understanding of the place showed me that the historic and cultural meaning of the waterfront, as a working waterfront, still has a stronghold on the city.”

Her studies abroad also helped her refine her understanding of urban waterfront conditions of Rotterdam in preparation for her master’s thesis; Bergelin will be developing a thesis about the waterfront in New York City.

“Thanks to the Global Gateway Grant, I was able to discover Rotterdam on my own initiative,” said Bergelin. “The grant was an important resource that enabled me to fulfill my research interests. It was truly an honor to be a recipient of the Gateway Grant, one which has also encouraged me to pursue other grant opportunities in the future.”

She described her research abroad as a base for understanding her personal style and approach towards research in general, as well as a frame of reference for her upcoming thesis work on a waterfront a bit closer to home.

The Global Gateway Graduate Student Research Abroad Grant encourages and promotes the professional and academic development of graduate researchers at The Ohio State University by providing financial support that allows students to undertake research abroad. Successful applicants will be awarded a grant of up to $1,000 per year to assist with travel related expenses for research abroad. For more information on applying, please visit the Council of Graduate Students website.

International Scholar Profile: Christian Niederwieser
What is your home country and city?
I was born in Innsbruck in the Austrian Alps, where I was very fond of skiing. I moved to Leipzig Germany when I was 16 and studied in Munich, Germany.

What are your undergraduate/graduate degrees?
I attended college at the Thomasgymnasium where Bach, the musician, used to teach in Leipzig, Germany. I earned my medical degree at the Ludwig Maximilian University Medical School in Munich, Germany.

What department are you in at Ohio State?
I work for the Comprehensive Cancer Center as a visiting scholar, under the direction of Dr. Clara Bloomfield.

What are your research/specialty interests?
My research interests are in cancer treatments. Here I am focusing on molecular markers in patients with Acute Myeloid Leukemia.

When did you arrive in the United States/Columbus and how long will you be here?
I arrived in May 2012 and I'm planning to stay approximately three years.

Why did you choose Ohio State?
The international reputation of the Ohio State University in cancer and leukemia is among the most important reasons to be here. The excellent engagement of the mentor, as witnessed by many past fellows of the department, was for me important as well. After reading her publications and listening to a few of her talks, I was impressed with her work and motivated to study cytogenetic and molecular topics in leukemia. After visiting The Ohio State University campus and meeting with Dr. Bloomfield and her research team, I was further convinced this was where I would like to do post-doctoral research. Finally, I started in June 2012 as a fellow in the department and I am very proud to be part of this team. From the first day I felt integrated and I am now working on my first abstract for a major scientific conference and on my first manuscript on this topic.
What have you been doing at Ohio State as part of your time here (research, etc.)?
My focus is on translational research in the field of leukemia. Acute Leukemia is a very heterogeneous disease and discovering new molecular alterations and their implications for treatment is essential.

What most surprised you about your experience in Columbus and the United States?
I was amazed by the kindness of the people and I felt at home from the first day. For example, when I was buying a futon and was struggling to get it into my car, a lady with a big pickup truck stopped and helped me bring it home. Also, I was astonished by the size of the stadium and the enthusiasm for football.

What has been the hardest thing to adapt to since you've come to Columbus?
Before moving to Columbus I had some experience living abroad. I had previous internships at Stanford and in hospitals in Italy, Austria and Germany. The kindness of the people working in the department here and at the university was essential to adapt quickly to my new life in the politically important “swing state.” So within a few days I had everything I needed. Colleagues loaned me a car until I had bought my own, offered to go to Ikea with their big car to help me shop, drove me around to get a cell phone, driver license and a bank account, took me out for dinner, let me stay in their home before I had my own apartment and invited me to classical music concerts. I also was impressed with the many international people working here, including those from Syria, Greece, Lebanon, China, Iran, Austria, Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, India and Finland. At the moment I’m trying to find out about skiing opportunities which I can reach by car.

What is the most fun/exciting thing you've done since you arrived at Ohio State?
When I came here, everyone told me how important Pelotonia is and that I should ride in it. Pelotonia is a fundraising event for cancer research depending mainly on how far the riders go on their bicycles. I heard it is the largest event of its kind in the U.S. Even though I was not regularly riding a bike back in Germany, I was motivated by the good idea behind it. With the help of a training partner and people standing and cheering with signs saying, “You saved my life,” on the streets, I finished at 100 miles.

How has the Office of International Affairs helped you adapt to campus life?
The Office of International Affairs was very helpful in taking care of...
administrative matters prior to my arrival in the U.S. I have attended OIA lectures and have learned about different basic topics related to life in Columbus and the USA in a very personal way. By participating in OIA monthly events, I have experienced the city and social life of Columbus, including the Gallery Hop, ice skating, a baseball game and the North Market. I have also made new friends and met international scholars from France, Italy, China, Mexico, Réunion, Russia and Spain and learned about their research, which all helped me assimilate easily.

Study Abroad Profile: Melissa Longshore

“The study abroad program that I went on with The Ohio State University [Sustaining Human Societies and the Natural Environment – Australia] was one of the most amazing adventures I've ever been on. We spent time in the rainforest and of course the Great Barrier Reef, which I'm sure if you asked was the highlight of many students. We had breathtaking moments throughout the entire trip, but seeing the reef so close was definitely an experience of its own. We spent three full days snorkeling and scuba driving on the reef, and got to see some of the ocean’s creatures in their natural environment. We learned a lot about the damages caused along the coastlines, and even on the tablelands, that affect areas in the oceans.

“I wanted to have a college experience that I would never forget and one that I could experience first hand so that later in life I can encourage my children to push themselves into situations that might seem out of reach.”
Melissa is a junior majoring in environmental science.

Study Abroad Profile: Dan Rajczyk

"Describing my study abroad experience is quite a difficult task. Since returning to the U.S., I have been asked this question regularly and am simply unable to put it into words. Being exposed to the array of cultures I witnessed was truly a life-changing experience. This summer, I basically lived and studied on a floating college campus — the MV Explorer, which transported me, along with 540 other college students from all across the country, to the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. On the ship, I studied international human rights law, international terrorism and international relations. Throughout the entire summer, I studied and experienced life in Barcelona, Rome, Naples, Croatia, Athens, Istanbul, Morocco and Portugal. Learning about and experiencing so many contrasting cultures has truly made me a global citizen. My summer studying abroad with Semester at Sea was without a doubt the most significant and impacting experience of my entire life.

“Ever since I applied for college and learned that studying abroad was even a possibility, I knew it was for me. Throughout my whole life, I have never enjoyed anything more than traveling (maybe Ohio State
It has always been a goal of mine to become a global citizen and impact the world. I have always wanted to study international law, and this summer was a perfect start. You really don't begin to understand American society until you experience other cultures, especially the roots of human civilization in the Mediterranean. I absolutely plan on studying abroad again before I graduate.”

Dan is a junior majoring in political science, entrepreneurship and international studies.

Vice provost honored for service to international education

Ohio State’s Vice Provost for Global Strategies and International Affairs William Brustein has been awarded the 2013 Charles Klasek Award for outstanding service to the field of international education administration. Presented by the Association of International Education Administrators, the award honors long-term and outstanding service to the field, including leadership, advocacy, publications and honors. Brustein is the 20th recipient of the award, which was presented to him during the association’s annual conference in New Orleans.

Brustein has spent much of his administrative career focused on international education and has extensive leadership experience in building international partnerships. Brustein assumed the newly created role of vice provost for global strategies and international affairs in 2009. He came to Ohio State from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he was associate provost for international affairs and director of international programs and studies. His work
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at Ohio State is dedicated to fully integrating international and multicultural experiences to the academic units within the university and expanding and enhancing its global reach. In three short years, Brustein has spearheaded the creation of two Global Gateway offices for Ohio State, located in Shanghai, China and Mumbai, India, as well as rapid progress in plans for a thorough internationalization of the Columbus campus.

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