Andréa Grottoli takes samples of coral for research off the coast of Puerto Morelos, Mexico.

Research team studies effects of ocean temperature change on Caribbean coral

As global climate change causes the temperature of the world’s oceans to rise, corals on the ocean floor are experiencing heat stress. Dr. Andréa Grottoli, a professor in the School of Earth Sciences, is currently conducting research on coral in the Caribbean, and aims to identify which traits or species are more resilient to temperature increases. Grottoli’s study focuses on coral bleaching — a heat or stress-induced loss of color resulting from temperature changes. Over time, bleaching can lead to mass mortality of corals.

Corals are an important part of a reef’s ecosystem, acting as a home, protector and food source for many underwater species. They provide the structural building blocks that form the reefs. Reefs also protect humans by providing a buffer for large waves heading toward shore. Many of the world’s reefs are associated with underdeveloped countries, providing fish as a food source, as well as a tourism hub for scuba diving and sport fishing.

Grottoli, a dual Canadian-American citizen originally from Ontario, began studying coral in 1993, 12 years before coming to Ohio State. Her on-site research is being conducted during the summer months in Puerto Morelos, Mexico, an area between Cancún and Playa del Carmen, at a marine lab associated with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

Grottoli’s team is made up of two PhD students — Stephen Levas, a Ford Foundation Minority Fellow, and Verena Shopef, an international student from Austria. This year she will also have the help of an undergraduate student researcher. The Ohio State research team works in collaboration with a team from the University of Delaware, led by Dr. Mark Warn. The group’s research is funded by a nearly $800,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

Global Strategies
A Q&A with William Brustein

Is Ohio State’s office in Shanghai open? We officially opened the Ohio State Global Gateway exploratory office in late February. The office is situated right in the heart of the downtown Shanghai business district, so we are very close to major corporations, many of our Ohio State alumni and offices of the Chinese government.

The Ohio State China Gateway has been officially registered and approved as a Foreign Representative Office (FRO) by the State Administration of Industry and Commerce of the People’s Republic of China.

Who is the director of the China Gateway? Phoebe You, a recent graduate of the Moritz College of Law, has been named the acting director of our China Gateway. Initially, Phoebe will focus on developing a network of Ohio State alumni, exploring the market for executive training opportunities for Ohio State, and providing assistance and opportunities to the potential exchange of faculty and students. She’ll also be our liaison with the Chinese government as Ohio State builds its presence in Shanghai.

Initially, we had hoped to begin offering training programs to business executives in China so that the Gateways would be revenue generating. However, we determined a phased in approach would be best at this particular time. And, our current classification as an FRO does not permit the university to engage in any revenue generating activity.

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Fulbright Scholar: Keating examines Sri Lanka’s feminist movement

Christine Keating, an assistant professor in the Department of Women’s Studies, has had the opportunity to travel to Sri Lanka, an island country in South Asia about 20 miles off the southern coast of India, several times over the last 20 years to study and to conduct research — the first time was as an exchange student in 1987. Last December, Keating traveled to Sri Lanka as a newly awarded Fulbright Scholar, and will return to Ohio State in July.

Keating works in the field of gender politics with an emphasis on transnational and postcolonial feminism. As part of her Fulbright fellowship, Keating will be conducting research on two projects and giving guest lectures and presentations to both faculty and students at universities and research centers in Sri Lanka.

She is pursuing two research projects during her time in Sri Lanka, where she is affiliated with the University of Peradeniya in the Department of Political Science. In one of her research projects, “Towards a Gender-Just Peace in Sri Lanka,” she will be both tracking and analyzing the openings and closures that the end of the civil war present for women in Sri Lanka. For her second project, “Cosmopolitan Solidarities,” she is examining the relationship between cosmopolitan and transnational approaches to feminist organizing through the lens of the Sri Lankan feminist movement and how it works to redress inequities among women along class, racial, ethnic and national lines.

“My aim is furthering models of feminist solidarity that can help build more inclusive, democratic movements for social justice worldwide,” Keating explained.

Keating believes that this year is an important year of transition in Sri Lanka. In May 2009, the Sri Lankan government defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which ended a 30-year civil war. “During the war, discourses and practices of gender liberation became deeply intertwined with discourses and practices of militarism. I’m very interested in exploring how struggles for gender justice are rearticulated in this transition,” Keating said.

She applied for a Fulbright fellowship so that she would have extended time to devote to her research projects, access to colleagues in Sri Lanka and the opportunity to bring her family with her while she worked in another country.

According to Keating, each visit to Sri Lanka deepens her affection for and connection to the country. “It is the country’s diversity — cultural, religious, ecological, geographical, political — that initially drew me to Sri Lanka,” she explained. “And, I think it is the aspect of the country that I still love best.”

Keating earned her PhD in political science at the University of Washington. She has received several awards, including one for teaching excellence at the University of Washington and she was a recipient of a Fulbright Junior Scholar Grant. She has been at Ohio State for five years.

Fulbright Week at Ohio State is April 26-30. For more information visit fulbright.osu.edu.

Caribbean (continued from page 1)

As part of her research, Grottoli and her team take samples of coral from the reef and place them in tanks in their Mexico lab. In these tanks, they induce temperature stress on some of the samples. They then examine the physiological traits associated with the survival and mortality of the different samples with the hope of better understanding what helps the survivors continue to thrive under stress. In addition, the coral samples’ response to bleaching stress, the team also examines how they recover over time.

In their second year of research, Grottoli’s team is preparing to return to Puerto Morelos this summer for further testing and analysis of their samples from last year, as well as to take new samples. During her time in Mexico, Grottoli micro-blogs updates from her Twitter account, www.twitter.com/CoralResearch.

With the results from their research, Grottoli and her team hope to be able to make a recommendation for conservation groups and marine-protected areas.

Global Strategies (continued from page 1)

What does the future hold for the China Gateway? Once we have conducted some research in the area to determine if a market exists for executive training programs, we would expect to apply for approval from the Chinese government to establish the Gateway as a Wholly Owned Foreign Enterprise, which will enable the China Gateway to generate revenue. If all goes according to plan, we believe that in the next year — and based on an assessment of our progress in the marketplace — we hope to open a full service Gateway that serves as a state-of-the-art facility for recruiting, networking, teaching, business consulting, and executive training.

What types of executive training programs are under consideration? Building on Ohio State’s areas of excellence and the matching needs of corporations in China, we have begun seeking expertise from our faculty to explore the potential of establishing professional training programs in China to include; 1) Food Safety; 2) Supply Chain Management/Logistics; 3) Corporate Resilience; 4) Intellectual Property; 5) U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act; 6) University Administration; 7) Physician Leadership; and 8) STEM Education.

Is the China Gateway moving in the right direction? I believe we are on the right track to succeed with our Global Gateways. Phoebe is already working with our alumni to foster relationships and grow our network in Greater China. We are exploring revenue-generating options that will share Ohio State’s expertise with businesses around the world; and we are finding ways to engage our faculty and our students in new research and educational opportunities. We are moving forward in a very positive way.

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Richard Martz

“I participated in a 10-day, architecture-focused study abroad program based mainly in Istanbul, Turkey, with excursions to sites in the Turkish countryside. The architecture in Turkey was historical and educational, and gave us something concrete and more engaging to relate to, given our previous coursework. The locals were incredibly kind people, always willing to help out and bridge the communication barrier, and always with a smile. Until this trip I had never traveled abroad, but after doing so I believe I’ll be more open and more considerate of my work and its meaning to an international audience.”

Richard is an undergraduate majoring in architecture.

Ena Brnjic

“I went to Athens, Greece for a short-term study abroad program. Over winter quarter I took Modern Greek H241: The Ancient past on modern Greek society. In Athens, we stayed just a couple of doors down from the new Acropolis museum, a short distance from the Acropolis itself. This experience helped me see how other people approach problems differently than Americans. Developing a global perspective is extremely important because we live in a global society that is becoming more and more connected because of technology.”

Ena is an undergraduate majoring in psychology.
Iceland study abroad program offers students a unique way to study the environment

Though its landmass is smaller than the state of Ohio, Iceland is a country that has a wealth of environmental diversity. An island covered in waterfalls and glaciers and positioned on a continental rift, the European country provides a perfect platform for Ohio State students to learn about the environment.

Now in its second year, the Iceland Environment & Natural Resources Study Abroad Program provides students with the opportunity to spend 11 days between spring and summer quarters exploring and studying the country’s natural beauty and distinctive environment. The program stems from Ohio State’s partnership with the Agricultural University of Iceland.

“What’s unique about Iceland is that there are so many different things you can see,” says Susan Burks, an academic advisor in the School of Environment & Natural Resources. “You can see environmental advantages and problems, and how the nation is dealing with them.”

Burks acts as a resident director for the experience, along with Palli Kolka, an ENR graduate student and Iceland native. Kolka is responsible for teaching the pre-departure class at Ohio State, ENR 694, which is taught during spring quarter. The class is an academic introduction to Iceland and the various environmental topics that will be explored first-hand during the study abroad experience. Students learn about the geology and volcanism of the island and the country’s land restoration and soil conservation efforts, and other political and economic points of importance.

During their time abroad, the students are based at the Agricultural University of Iceland, in the southwest area of the country. From this location they are able to take one- and two-day excursions around the west and southern coasts.

“We can see so much without having to go far,” says Burks.

What have you been doing at Ohio State as part of your exchange visit?
I have been interested in global education and multicultural education related to social studies education. So I wanted to experience the U.S. culture and civic education process in school and home. For this, I audited several classes connected with my concerns, including Professor Merryfield’s. I observed social studies classroom activities in high school, so I have an understanding of the curriculum process for civic education in Ohio. I went to the home of my daughter’s friend to experience the U.S. culture several times, including a Halloween party, Thanksgiving Day, and a sleepover. Through this I have come to research the family’s civic education. Also, I made Korean food for U.S. students and international students in auditing classes. Through this activity I could introduce Korean food culture. I traveled to many attractions in U.S., Canada and Mexico, too. My travel aim is to understand and enjoy other cultures and accept them open-mindedly. Finally, I wanted to learn English. Life in U. S. was first to me. So I tried to polish my English skills.

What has most surprised you about your experience in Columbus?
The beautiful houses and landscape in Columbus impressed me. Green scenery, big trees, blue sky, and the flowers around the neighborhood made me feel as if I were in heaven.

What has been the hardest thing to adapt to since you’ve come to Columbus?
I couldn’t go around or take a walk in the neighborhood at night or at dark. Public transportation in Columbus is not convenient, especially to the airport.

What is the most fun/exciting thing you’ve done since you’ve arrived at Ohio State?
Visiting a friend’s house of my daughter’s and enjoying U.S. culture of the family in Ohio. For example, Halloween trick or treat – giving out chocolates and candies – Thanksgiving Day food experience with a U.S. family, Christmas night lights in the neighborhood.

How has the Office of International Affairs helped you adapt to campus life?
The Office of International Affairs has been helpful in several ways, the most important of which is English conversation lunch program. Through these activities I could upgrade my English listening and speaking skills, get American culture and meet international scholars. Also, I traveled to adjacent countries safely and conveniently with guidance of OIA during my stay in the U.S. Sometimes OIA gave useful information to international scholars with e-mail, letting us know about free use of RPAC, Taste of OSU, Halloween party, Thanksgiving party, and potluck sharing.

Global Perspectives Winter Quarter 2010
Honors students present research in Brazil, host Brazilian students at Denman

A commitment to undergraduate research is the focus of the collaboration between The Ohio State University Honors & Scholars Program and the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Each year students from the University of São Paulo visit Ohio State and students from Ohio State visit the University of São Paulo. This international exchange between the two universities allows undergraduate students to share their research with peers, dialogue with faculty and university administrators, as well as get an in-depth look at what type of research is going on at each of the two institutions.

“Ohio State students visit the University of São Paulo for one week during the fall quarter,” explained Garret Heysel, associate director for Scholars Programs. “While in Brazil, students visit several of the University of São Paulo campuses, present their research at campus symposiums, engage in research discussions with Brazilian students and faculty, tour laboratories, and enjoy various cultural activities.”

To participate in this study abroad experience Ohio State students must first present at the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum that takes place on campus each May. During Autumn Quarter 2009, five undergraduate researchers traveled to Brazil to present their findings at the University of São Paulo’s International Research Symposium from November 7 - 14. Honors students Andrew Campbell (biology), Amy Eakins (anthropology), Richard Gallenstein (biology), Amanda Harper (biomedical science) and Hudson McFann (geography) all competed in the research forum and were then selected to represent the university in this symposium that regularly features more than 4,000 undergraduate researchers from various nations.

“I was appreciative of the opportunity to share this important work abroad. Especially because I could receive feedback from different perspectives while exploring the culture of Brazil,” said Campbell. “I also learned to explain my research more conceptually, with minimal jargon, to provide a clearer snapshot of the relevance and context of my findings from a less detailed level of analysis.”

“The Brazil Research Exchange Program is more than a conference and more than a study abroad: it’s an opportunity to do something that few undergrads ever get the chance to do: present internationally,” said Eakins, who has been abroad through an honors London trip, a summer in Scotland, a field school in Panama where she conducted research on primates, as well as presenting her research in Brazil. “Presenting internationally gave me a new perspective on my research and allowed me to meet students from around the world who also love the processes of science and learning.”

“Since the Brazil Research Exchange Program was established in 2001, more than 40 Ohio State undergraduate researchers have showcased their research before an international audience of peers and academic specialists in Brazil,” said Grace Johnson, director of study abroad at Ohio State. “This extraordinary opportunity introduces students to the international dimensions of their chosen fields as well as future possibilities for their research.”

The University of São Paulo students will travel to Columbus this spring to present their research here on campus at the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum. These Brazilian students will also meet with Ohio State professors and share informal research presentations.

Marion campus French class studies European culture, then experiences it firsthand

Rather than spend their free time relaxing, a group of students from the Ohio State University Marion Campus recently traveled more than 5,000 miles to learn about European culture during their spring break. As an extension of the Marion campus French 294 class, 25 students spent nine days in Greece and Turkey, learning about local culture and applying previous knowledge from their pre-departure class.

During winter quarter every year, a group of students at the Marion Campus are enrolled in French 294, a class designed to provide students with a taste of Francophone countries and the French language. The goal of the course is to increase students’ cultural awareness and help them develop knowledge of art and architecture in Francophone countries.

“As part of learning any foreign language, you have to introduce the culture,” said Dr. Zuheir Alidib, the French 294 lecturer. “Unfortunately, we tend to neglect the culture the most of any aspect of learning a language.”

Alidib says that the five components of studying a language are reading, writing, listening, speaking and culture, all of which are equally important.

Started as part of French Club activities, the supplementary class experience was initiated by Alidib, a senior lecturer in French and Arabic language and culture. Alidib thought that the students lacked a culture component to their language education, so he started offering cultural activities like film screenings, potluck dinners and small field trips. With Alidib as the lead, Marion’s French Club began traveling to Quebec in 2000. The community there offered students a sample of French-speaking culture that was within driving distance of Marion.

The French Club funded the trip by hosting bake sales, concerts and film screenings on campus, charging a small fee for each. The money raised during these efforts was divided evenly among the students. Just two years later, the experience became more than a trip, as students were required to take a 3-credit class in order to participate. The location also changed, and Europe was added to the itinerary.

“Quebec is great, but you are limited to the North American mind-set, and I wanted my students to be exposed to European ways of thinking and culture,” said Alidib.

In 2002, the group began traveling to Europe’s Francophone countries, as well as several others. They began with France and Spain, and in the years following, visited Italy, Morocco and Switzerland, keeping France as a destination every year.

For the first time since its inception, this year, the class traveled to Greece and Turkey, in an effort to open the program to more university students than just those interested in the French language. The university also began to award scholarships to students who successfully completed the class requirements, so that more students were able to participate in the experience.

“Most of our students have never left central Ohio, so this provides them with an excellent opportunity to experience another culture,” said Alidib. Because his expertise is limited to French and Arabic, Alidib called on his colleagues to assist him in teaching the class this year. He invited other faculty members to speak about Greece and Turkey, and to help students learn survival phrases in those countries’ native languages. In the weeks leading up to spring break, students’ coursework prepares them to be immersed in the local culture.

As part of the requirements for the class, students must write a research paper about a site that they will visit while they are abroad and present it to Ohio State students and the Marion community upon their return. During their international experience, they must keep an analytical journal to be used as both an educational tool and a recruiting tool for potential French 294 students.

For the 2011 trip, Alidib has already begun to recruit students for a class that will focus on the Paris, Normandy, and Brittany regions of France, and London.

Ohio State honors students tour a Cassava refinery (bio-fuel) plant in Prassununga, Brazil

Bottom: A group of Marion campus French 294 students with Dr. Alidib (far right) at the “Lion of Lucerne” in Lucerne, Switzerland