

CONNECTING THE HANDS & FEET OF THE WORLD

OsoGLOBAL

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A PUBLICATION FOR BAYLOR'S GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Life beyond the Baylor bubble

by Makenzi Epps 

Fabulous, unforgettable and life-changing are just a few ways to describe my study abroad experience.

Last semester I lived and attended college in Madrid, Spain, through Baylor's affiliate program with St. Louis University. It has always been my goal to travel and learn about different cultures and customs. Study abroad is the perfect way to get a taste of a completely different world.

Spain was just a different world. Having spent years studying culture and the Spanish language, I left the United States confident that I was prepared to embrace the differences between the U.S. and Madrid. I was wrong.

Arriving in Madrid after fourteen hours of air travel and layovers, I vividly remember thinking, "Wow, everything's in Spanish." This may seem painfully obvious, but falling asleep as a member of the majority and waking up as a distinct minority is quite a bazaar experience.

My roommate and I arrived at Señora Mar's apartment after some confusion about the meaning of a "zero" floor (one of the buttons on the elevator panel) and our own Spanish version of Marco Polo. When we met Mar, we introduced ourselves by shaking hands, even though we were aware that kisses on the cheek are the traditional form of greeting. Although we reverted to what made us feel most comfortable, I quickly learned that comfort was rarely an indication of correct behavior.

After the first two weeks, the novelty started to wear off; it was a difficult adjustment. Living in the heart of the city made me feel claustrophobic; I literally stopped



Makenzi Epps



photo by Makenzi Epps

While Makenzi Epps studied abroad, she visited The Prado Museum in Madrid, Spain.

and stared the first time I saw grass. It was overwhelming and exhausting to try to remember all of the new vocabulary and cultural rules. When I tried to buy stamps, I couldn't remember the word and had to resort to describing stamps as "square things used to send letters." It worked, but my troubles did not end there. I spent the next week looking for a blue metal "U.S. Mail" drop box. In Spain the mail drop boxes are bright yellow and say "Correos" down the side—very obvious unless you are looking for something completely different. It also took time to get used to the public displays of affection (PDA) and general nonchalance. Nothing seemed nearly as life-altering as it does in the U.S.

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One language

Unity, diversity at Global Village

by Kimberly Gibson



On Sept. 28, strings of lights twinkled in the trees of the Vara Martin Daniel Plaza, reminding me of the Chiang Mai night bazaar. However, the many booths scattered on the grounds weren't filled with haggling vendors, but with students, professors, missionaries and volunteers—all coming together seeking the common hope of finding one another different.

Laughing girls tugged each other toward the Indian Sub-

continent Student Association's henna tattoo booth while others took turns dressing up in costumes from around the world.

The musical beat of a Ghanaian drum drew a group of boys to the linguistics booth. I spied some of my friends sampling Kaow Neaw sticky rice from Thailand as well as French croissants with nutella.

A fair-trade booth had fascinating items to buy from around the world. A Latin jazz band tempted



Kim Gibson



photo by Claire Moncla

From left to right: Kim Gibson, Kim Hill, Abigail Risner and Ryan Duncan staff a booth at the Global Village in the sub bowl on Baylor Campus in September.

everyone to dance, and some gave in.

But no dancing was enjoyed more than the vibrant Indian dance by several members of the ISSA.

I talked with missionaries Hunter and Mary Byrd where I learned much about their family living and working in southern Thailand. Everywhere I looked I could see people meeting each other.

As I manned my table with scrapbooks from my childhood abroad, I had a lively conversation with a pair of international students from East Asia.

And that is what it's all about. This is a community of globally-minded, fun-loving, fascinating people, and this is where I want to be. Everyone engaged—everyone listening to each other. "You're from this country? I spent a summer there," was a constant refrain

I heard echoed through that night.

Later, as I jumped Chinese jump rope, a Venezuelan woman began jumping with

me. We both laughed to find we had grown up playing the same childhood game. Whatever name we had for the game, we'd been jumping in the same language that night.

"This is a community of globally-minded, fun-loving, fascinating people, and this is where I want to be."

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photo by Makenzi Epps

Makenzi Epps outside a train station in Madrid, Spain, during her semester abroad last Spring.

Student learns life lessons in Spain study abroad trip

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It took about a month to get into a routine. By then, I could tell an American by their shoes and effectively give directions. I fell in love with the city, people and culture. I went to plays, operas, museums and frequented Retiro Park—all within walking distance. I also had the opportunity to take tango lessons and visit a tango club. On weekends and holidays, I traveled. During my semester abroad I visited Italy, Greece, England and France.

My Spanish family was also an important part of my experience. Mar and Nando treated us like their children whether we blew a light fuse, locked ourselves out or nearly started a fire. We discussed everything from boys to politics. I discovered I loved my new world and my second family. Nando told me, roughly translated, "Don't be afraid. Live in the moment and be happy; and if you're already happy... try to be happier." That is now my philosophy. My experiences in Spain changed my view from looking in on a new culture to being a part of it.

It also changed my view of the Global Community Living & Learning Center. Before I studied abroad, it was hard to fully embrace all of the different cultures and views. Now I am much more intentional about my involvement in the LLC and more appreciative of all that it has to offer. The LLC is the perfect opportunity to pursue knowledge of foreign cultures, and I now take full advantage of it all.

GLOBAL MOVIE NIGHT



by Ke'leigh Sapp



For movie night, the Global Community brings a little piece of a specific culture to campus. Usually starting at 6 p.m. in Bennett Auditorium, a critically acclaimed foreign film from a different country is shown each week.

Set in 1988 Czech Republic, *Kolya* is a sentimental, yet entertaining film containing a fresh view on what it means to be selfless in order to help someone you hardly know. The story follows the relationship of Louka, a concert cellist who hates the Russians, and Kolya, the Rus-

sian son of Louka's wife from an illegitimate marriage. The movie portrays a true sense of liberty, compassion and self-determination that correlates to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Using real footage of the fall of the Berlin Wall, *Kolya* was truly inspiring and was selected as Best Foreign Film in 1997.



Ke'leigh Sapp

Is Global Community your cup of tea?

by Demetria Williams



In our GC-LLC class, we read *Three Cups of Tea*, which follows the mountaineer Greg Mortenson and his journey to become a humanitarian.

In the book, he is told, "The first time you share tea with a Balti, you are a stranger. The second time you take tea, you are an honored guest. The third time you share a cup of tea, you become family." This event inspires Mortenson to become a humanitarian.

Because we live in the Global Community, this book greatly applies to us. Not only did we learn about various cultures and widen our global mindset, it also taught us to value the people around us and to embrace differences. As an assignment,



photo by Claire Moncla

GC-LLC member Lacey Murphy participates in a tea ceremony held on Nov. 19 inspired by *Three Cups of Tea*

we put ourselves in a culture group's shoes, exploring their education, culture and tradition.



Monica Lima is the Brooks Flats hall director for the Global Community LLC

INSIDE PERSPECTIVE

"One of my personal favorites was being able to be a part of an assessment called the Global Mindset Inventory with the GC-LLC and ELG. This was an extremely informative tool that top Fortune 500 companies and well-known corporations around the world use to assess global leadership. In eight minutes, most GC-LLC and ELG students took an online assessment that broke their global awareness into three tangible categories that would help them understand their strengths and challenges. After going to the Thunderbird School of Management in Phoenix, Ariz., (where the test originated) for training, I was able to debrief the results in the GC course. What a great experience to be able to see areas where we can improve in our global mindset and all become more culturally aware of the people around us."

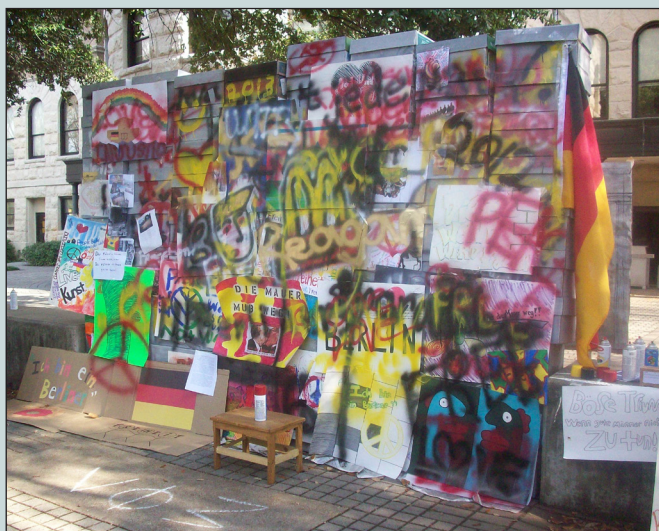


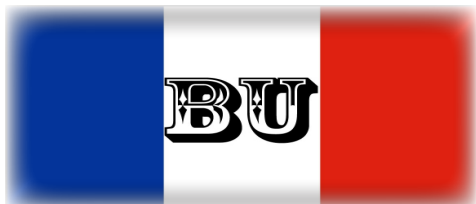
photo by Claire Moncla

Students in the Global Community's German suite, Celia Heidbrier, Natascha Mellis, Katelyn Price and Allie Smith, participated in a demonstration of the Berlin Wall on the 20-year anniversary of its fall. The wall was constructed outside the Bill Daniel Student Center on the morning of Nov. 9 and then knocked down that evening. German classes stood around the wall answering questions.



photo by Janet Norden

From left to right: GC-LLC members Makenzi Epps and Kim Gibson presented at the Texas Foreign Language Association's conference in Austin on Oct. 29-31. The TFLA is a non-profit organization founded in 1953 that is dedicated to the advancement of languages other than English. Janet Norden, director of the Global Community, accompanied the students on their trip.



Zaïneb Touati

WHO'S

GC-LLC member Zaïneb Touati is thousands of miles from her home, France, but she is enjoying the adjustment to the American lifestyle here at Baylor. However, her objective is different than that of most college students – experience, but no degree. Touati is a non-degree seeking student which is a rare case at Baylor. The French native is specifically here researching her thesis in linguistics rather than accumulating credit hours. One of her main interests is the English language. She is involved in a variety of language groups on campus such as the LLC Lingo Group and Table Française. She enjoys studying linguistics in America so much that she may live in an English-speaking country after she graduates.

OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE

"Going to GC community events has set this semester apart from others. After visiting language suites, the Global Village, community dinners, the tea ceremony and an ELG BBQ, I looked back on my experiences, and one memory had made a deeper handprint in my mind than the others.

My first community dinner was an experience I could not easily forget. I walked in a stranger and left feeling comradery with the group of diverse students. For the dinner, Nigerian students cooked okra soup, pounded yams, fried plantains and moi moi, a steamed bean pudding. We stood in the kitchen of Monica Lima's apartment in Brooks Flats and listened to the explanations of the dishes and their stories from growing up in Nigeria. I left with a greater appreciation for other cultures."



Claire Moncla is one of the journalism student editors of the OsoGlobal newsletter



photo by Rod Aydelotte

From left to right: Kim Gibson, Stephanie Rivera, Ke'leigh Sapp, Monica Lima, Michael Lyssy and Helen Woldemichael join together in prayer before the community dinner potluck at Lima's apartment in Brooks Flats on Nov. 15. Community dinners are held once a month and are usually tailored to a specific country. Some of this semester's dinners include Thai, Chinese and Nigerian.



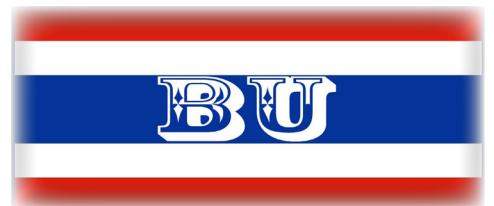
photo by Rod Aydelotte

From left to right: Zaïneb Touati, Lacey Murphy, Celia Heidbrier and Kim Gibson line up to partake in the Global Community's potluck dinner at 7 p.m. on Nov. 15. Before dinner, students made a circle and described the dish they brought and its origins. After all the food was sampled, everyone lounged in Lima's dining room and living room talking and laughing.

WHO?

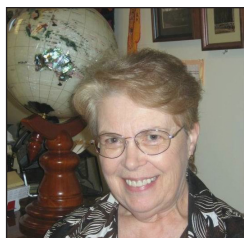


Kim Gibson



Contributing writer Kim Gibson was raised in a place very different than Central Texas—Thailand. Her interest and participation in international groups on campus stemmed from 14 years she spent living in Thailand. She even speaks fluent Thai. Gibson's parents lived in Thailand as medical missionaries for 20 years. Gibson lived in Chacheungsao province for nearly eight years, where her parents worked at Bangkla Baptist Hospital. For the next seven years, her family lived in Nan province in Northern Thailand, where her parents started a clinic. Her family now resides in College Station, Texas. Gibson's time overseas has inspired her to someday return to Thailand and teach English.

Letter from the Director



by Janet Norden 

Janet Norden is also an instructor in the Modern Foreign Languages Department.

A faculty member confided: "This is building a dream with a pick and a shovel!" And, at times, that's how it felt. But the fact is, people pitched in.

Dr. Mike Morrison, of the Center for International Education, believed in the Global Center dream and enlisted the support of the Living & Learning Center. He also encouraged starting an ELG

That beginning Fall 2008 semester presented huge challenges to all, including to the students who were in the GC-LLC. They experienced immersion in four-person foreign language suites, where they had luxurious accommodations, but, in general, did not have the anticipated native speaker help.

This put a heavy responsibility upon suite members' abilities to communicate, cooperate and build friendships in a foreign language! They struggled to obey the "target-language-only" rule. We commend them. They were the pioneers who suffered with little support, venting mainly through their journaling. In addition, most gave many hours of service to their community.

The hardships endured by students were also experienced by faculty and staff, who devoted so many hours to blazing trails and structuring the program that we could not adequately meet students' needs as we wished. Nevertheless, together we built the foundation.

"It's not easy to build a community, but when so many believe in the dream—and also grab a pick and shovel—their hands-on prayers inspire us all."

And we gladly report, the second year shows a tremendous improvement! Leadership under graduate student director

Emily Rodgers has forged links to many on- and off-campus programs. The Global Community Advisory Board, with faculty, staff and student members, meets at least monthly, with committee meetings in between, and is the decision-making body. Faculty from the Department of Modern Foreign Languages have generously contributed thousands of hours, meeting weekly with student lingo groups and providing advice.

It is not easy to build a community. But, when so many believe in the dream—and also grab a pick and a shovel—their hands-on prayers inspire us all.



FROM A - Z

Apply- The application deadline for regular admission is Feb. 1.

Birth- The Global Community began in Fall 2008.

ELG- The Global Community Engaged Learning Group (or GC-ELG) is a global awareness class taken by incoming freshman for three semesters with an optional semester is dedicated to research.

LLC- The Global Community Living & Learning Center (or GC-LLC) is a group of students living and learning together about global issues and languages. Students live in Brooks Flats, with each suite dedicated to a certain language. They take a class and attend lingo groups once a week.

Language Suite- Eight female suites and two male suites are located on the second and third floors of Brooks flats; five languages are represented in these suites.

Lingo Groups- Domestic and international students meet once a week with a faculty partner from the Modern Foreign Languages Department to practice oral skills in French, German, Spanish, Korean and Chinese.

Numbers- There are 44 students in the LLC, 13 countries represented in the LLC, 16 students in ELG and more than 20 professors involved with the lingo groups.

URSA- The Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Achievement is for all undergraduate students to maximize their education through research and scholarly activities found both within the classroom and beyond.



Glimpse of a Grad: Emily Rodgers

Emily Rodgers, the GC-LLC program director, pursues a master's in higher education and student affairs. She loves to read, paint, cook and travel.