


Where in the world are CFAES students?

Story by Casey Beacom



Students and faculty get together before going zip-lining in Ecuador.

Imagine closing your eyes, spinning a globe and pointing at random. Your finger lands on Ireland and the next thing you know, you're there immersing yourself in their culture, talking with locals and kissing the Blarney stone. Or you are in Iceland swimming in hot springs and waterfalls everyday while learning about how different their soil is than soil in the United States, and how they cope with it.

The Ohio State University study abroad programs are able to make this dream a reality. With over 100 different programs, you can virtually go anywhere in the world, ranging from a few weeks abroad up to an entire year.

Whether you are looking for an internship or a full-time job, it's no secret that the job market is more competitive than ever. Many students are looking for ways to set themselves apart and be more appealing to potential employers. "Study abroad programs are a great way to further your education. They are guaranteed to be the best experience of your college life, especially if you have not traveled out of the country before," said Brad Piper, senior in animal sciences.

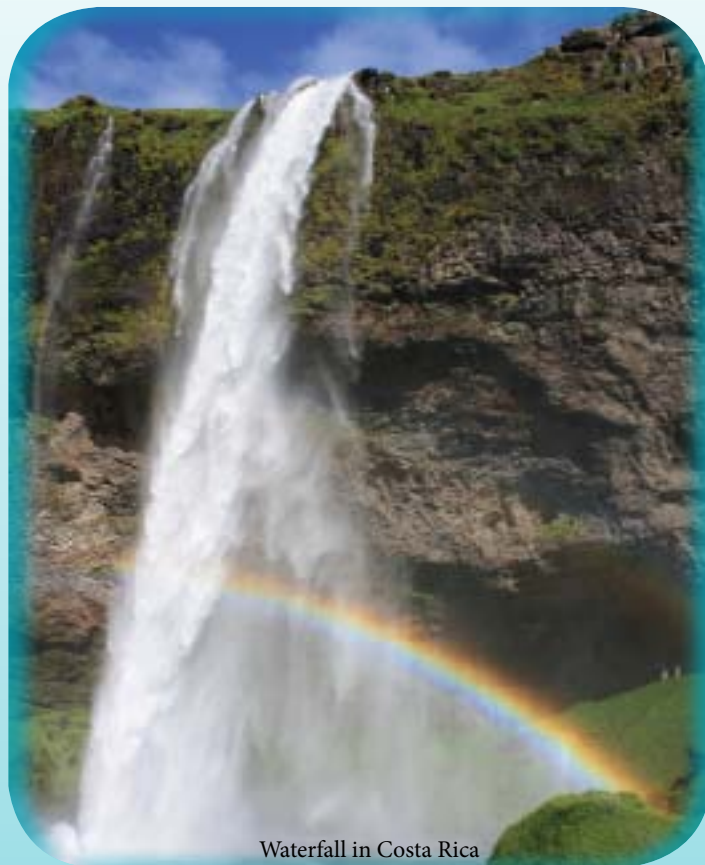
HOW DO I START?

If you want to check out one of the study abroad programs available, you are encouraged to schedule a meeting with Kelly Koren, study abroad specialist in the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). Koren will eagerly welcome you to her office filled with pictures and mementos from around the world and help you determine your goals of what you want to get out of your experience while abroad.

"It is never too early to plan your study abroad trip; you can start planning as early as a year in advance, and in as little as two and a half months in advance," said Koren. She suggests getting your passport as early as when you are a senior in high school, since it is valid for 10 years, and it can take about six to 10 weeks to process.

There are multiple information sessions throughout the year to inform you about particular study abroad trips and to answer any questions you may have. After you have attended a session, you can apply to study abroad by going to buckeyelink.osu.edu and filling out the application and writing a personal statement. This will take approximately 15 minutes. There is also a required \$150 fee when applying, which will be refunded if you are not accepted.

After you apply, you will not find out if you have been accepted until at least the day after applications are due. You will then be notified of acceptance by means of e-mail, and will then be required to interview so the trip advisors can understand your goals for studying abroad and help you get the most out of your experience.



Waterfall in Costa Rica

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

If financial issues are holding you back, Koren suggests talking with Pat Whittington, PhD, about possible loans through the college. Once you have been accepted you will receive a link for various study abroad scholarship opportunities, including assistance offered by the University, CFAES and grants. Study abroad program costs depend on the length of the trip, whether or not airfare is included, where you will be staying and other organized group tours and trips. "Don't worry about the financial part of the trip. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity to make memories you'll have forever," said Trey Miller, sophomore in agribusiness.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I GET ACCEPTED?

Once you are accepted into the program, you will be required to attend two orientation meetings before you go abroad. This will give you a chance to meet those traveling with you, learn what to pack, the history of the country and a little about the language spoken in the particular region you will be visiting. Previous language courses are not required and usually are not an issue, but it largely depends on your comfort level and the country in which you are studying abroad.

While abroad, you must earn a minimum of three credit hours paired with a two credit hour class prior to going abroad. You can earn a maximum of 15 credit hours.

"The experience helps you develop personally," said Koren "It looks good on your resume, is a great conversation point in interviews, helps make you stand out by showing you are willing to invest in yourself and that you value other cultures."

So wipe the dust off your globe, find your dream destination and start planning your study abroad experience of a lifetime. **11**

