In 1962 the first UC students ventured out across the
globe launching the University of California’s Education
Abroad Program (UCEAP). A half-century later, UCEAP
is a national leader in undergraduate student exchange,
serving all ten UC campuses by instilling UC students
with the knowledge, understanding, and skills neces-
sary for work and life in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world.

Many events and activities are planned to
mark this important milestone. We invite
you to attend one of the below and check
the websites for events later in the year:

UCEAP 50th Anniversary Alumni &
Friends Reunion
Saturday, April 28, 2012
5:30-8:30 p.m.
UC Santa Barbara, Corwin Pavilion

UCEP 50th Anniversary Celebration
and Study Abroad Scholarship Fundraiser
Saturday, May 12, 2012
4:30-6:30 p.m.
Global Viewpoint Lounge,
UC Irvine Student Center

Visit UC Irvine’s virtual celebration of
study abroad. You may see someone
you know! Check out the photos on the
left of each page, and then send us yours
via e-mail to studyabroad@uci.edu
A Lifelong Study Abroad Experience
by Artin Betpera, UCEAP Alumnus Netherlands Fall 2001

You may not be able to relate, but when my dad taught me how to swim, he didn’t enroll me in the “Happy Kiddy Swim Academy.” Rather, he picked me up and flung me in the deep end of our community pool to fend for my life in its treacherous six foot depths. Given the fact that I sit here writing this article, I’m sure you can guess I did not drown. On the contrary, I learned how to swim, and swim well. This is what you do when you study abroad: you pick yourself up, and fling yourself halfway across the world into the metaphorical deep end of another country and culture.

I studied abroad at University College Utrecht in the Netherlands during the fall of 2001. Since I was a participant of the UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP), however, I quickly realized I wasn’t in the deep end alone; I was there with a group of similarly situated UC students with whom I quickly became close friends. We acclimated to living abroad together, traveled together, and together experienced the profound growth as individuals that comes from studying abroad.

While fall semester ultimately drew to a close, and with it our time together in Utrecht, that intangible energy and vibe that developed between us never did. Almost every year since our time abroad, we’ve held some kind of reunion or gathering. Every time we reunite, it feels like a continuation of our experience in Utrecht, and even ten years later, the dynamic that was formed amongst us halfway across the world still thrives. As the years progressed, our study abroad reunions turned into weddings. Weddings then turned into occasions to get together and welcome the new “Utrecht Babies” (including my own daughter Olivia). Now, we get our kids together and get ahead of ourselves by forming grand plans to send them abroad to usher in a new generation of well-rounded and worldly people.

I’ve always felt blessed to have such a great experience abroad, and a group of friends that I know I will have for the rest of my life. Even more so, my experience abroad is not something confined to a photo album on the shelf, but something that is still very much alive today.
To Say, “I studied abroad”
by Shaun Galvan, UCEAP Alumnus Australia Fall 2010

It should not be a recommendation to study abroad in the country of your choice; it needs to be a requirement! After participating in a six-month Australian immersion program through UCEAP, there were lessons that I had learned that just could not simply be taught in the traditional classroom setting. This experience was so overwhelming that it created an unprecedented long-term positive personality change. It allowed me to understand that having a broad-minded tolerance of others as well as being culturally sensitive to new ideas are vital concepts to possess in everyday life.

My time abroad was a time when I took advantage of the many opportunities that were available to me. For instance, I participated in on-campus chemistry research that focused on a laser technique to examine the combustion of certain chemicals found in biodiesel. Such an experience allowed for close contact with the faculty at my host university of Wollongong, and a comfortable working relationship developed. I found my time researching abroad to be one of the highlights because it directly prepared me for a career in the sciences, as well as ultimately influenced my decision to apply to graduate school - a path I had not initially set out to take.

Another experience I treasure is my participation with the jazz orchestra at the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music. I have been performing music for over a decade, but I had been interested in the idea of playing music in another country so when the opportunity to play in Australia arose, I jumped at it. I rehearsed for many weeks and months playing percussion and showcased my talent at a community event in front of thousands of people. It was very meaningful to be a part of this group because it was a group that shared an affinity for jazz music: an American art form; by contributing my American musical influence to the band, I felt as I enhanced the music experience for both my music colleagues and myself.

I did get to travel around Australia and it was indeed an opportunity worth mentioning; however, the best way to really explore Australia at its finest is to live and interact with its community. Throughout my stay, I made lifelong friends and acquaintances that I continue to contact to this day. They were there for me during my happy times; they were also there for me whenever I felt out of place or in anyway emotionally down. They made me comfortable no matter what mood I was feeling and I consider them to be the best part of my overall study abroad experience.

As a current International Peer Group Mentor at UC Irvine, I get to apply the knowledge I gained through my overseas experiences to help guide current UCI international freshman overcome any personal obstacles they may experience and help them feel more a part of American society. This opportunity and those abroad have made my international experience a unique one and something I will never take for granted. The ramifications that arise from a study abroad experience are simply unregretful. It is a great feeling to say that ‘I studied abroad’ rather than ‘I wish I studied abroad.’
I am a searcher. I am proud to say, that I search through a global perspective. It is a perspective of curiosity, knowledge, experiences... and sometimes mistakes, but ultimately one of understanding. Here at the University of California, Irvine, my experiences as a student have connected me to the global world, and once you arrive you can never go back!

It all started my freshman year under the wing of the Global Leadership Certificate Program (GLCP). My experience with GLCP has been one of the most influential college experiences. I feel that most of my collegiate peers are not really aware of how they can and do impact the global community. What I have discovered within GLCP is that students can create an amazing and prolonged community impact because they are the ones who are driven to achieve and who hold fresh ideas that can make a difference across borders.

I have always craved a connection with other countries and cultures, but I never knew that “global” conversations with fellow students and faculty at UCI could have such a profound impact on who I am and the goals I wish to achieve.

GLCP has connected me to this amazing network of students, run by their strong independence and individual aspirations on how they will impact the UCI community and global world. In GLCP every student is given the chance to inspire others and be inspired themselves. Now that I am the president of the Global Leadership Student Association (GLSA), which is the support group for GLCP students, I have found my niche. We are UCI students with a global perspective in mind, searching for a cause to advocate for, searching for our purpose as a student of a truly “world-class” academia. These issues range from the local budget issues affecting higher education in California, to the environmental and human rights issues all around the world. Tomorrow’s global leaders are today’s curious minds.

I am not sure yet what my cause or contribution will be, but I am excited to study abroad this coming fall in Cordoba, Spain! I feel this will be another influential college experience that will bring me one step closer ...(story continued on page 5)
(Continued from page 4)... to my purpose. I hope to work with faculty in researching the effects of migration on African refugees who have migrated to the south of Spain, and how this impacts their quality of life and health. I also am seeking the fundamental truth of how exactly Spain influenced my Filipino heritage so much! Was it even Spain? These are the questions I hope to have answered, as I seek truth to my identity constantly. This upcoming adventure is only a stepping stone, but I look forward to all the challenges and rewards it will bring.

Be in our Spotlight!

We would love to include YOUR story and insights in our *NEW* web feature: Alumni Spotlight. Testimonials from past participants are very compelling for current Anteaters who are considering studying abroad. To inspire more global learners and leaders, share where your path has taken you by completing our on-line questionnaire.

Make a life-changing experience possible!

Cost is the primary barrier to study abroad cited by students and parents. Even though many study abroad options are similar to the cost of studying at UCI and financial aid applies, cost can still be a real barrier. Anteaters who normally work while attending UCI need to replace that lost income. Those who commute from their parent’s home to UCI face additional expenses when planning to study abroad. And finally, scholarships reduce loan indebtedness, which is plaguing so many college students in our current economy.

Make your contribution to the UCI Friends of Study Abroad Scholarship fund today!

Here’s how you can get involved!