THE INTERNATIONAL HUB

On behalf of International Affairs and Global Strategies we’d like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and give you a brief overview of our team, our quest, our values and goals, and the reason for initiating this newsletter!

WHO ARE WE?
We took the Office of International Studies, Study Abroad, the English Language Institute, and International Services Center and integrated them into a single unit: International Affairs and Global Strategies (we say I.A.G.S.). We have strong partnerships with Global UCF and the Office of Global Perspectives and collectively we are all focused on the internationalization of UCF.

WHAT DO WE DO?
We are UCF’s International Hub on campus, facilitating communication and partnerships across disciplines, colleges, cultures, and nations.

WHERE ARE WE?
www.international.ucf.edu virtually, or in person in three places: the Barbara Ying Center, the Center for Multilingual Multicultural Studies, and Millican Hall. In April 2016, you will find us in two places: The new Global UCF building on memory mall and The Barbara Ying International Welcome Center (previously the Barbara Ying Center).

OUR QUEST:
To help transform lives by providing access to high impact, international experiences across the UCF and global community with a commitment to excellence in partnership, innovation, and services.

Cynthia Young, Ph.D.
VICE PROVOST

UCF BY THE NUMBERS
SPRING 2016

2,271 International Students
122 Countries Represented
176 Global UCF Students
226 English Language Institute

TOP 5 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

CHINA 323
INDIA 261
SAUDI ARABIA 136
VENUEZUELA 103
IRAN 103

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INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

English Language Institute

The English Language Institute (ELI) at UCF enrolls approximately 300 international students per semester from as many as 70 different countries around the world.

By Bill Morrison

A bby McMillin is one of 29 faculty members teaching at ELI who share a passion for second language acquisition and learning about other cultures. One of the classes Abby teaches is a communication skills course. This class focuses on conversational and comprehensive communication skills by engaging in activities and conducting actual conversations with native English speakers in the community. She reflects on her own experiences and struggles with learning a foreign language and reminds her students how inspiring they are. “I always say, ‘you guys are my heroes’ I could never do what they are doing. I would just be repeating the first level again and again,” she said.

Abby keeps class activities as engaging and entertaining as possible. One example of an in-class activity is an exercise called up and down the river. Students pair up and sit across from one another in two lines. Abby gives the students a topic, starts a clock for two minutes and asks the students to discuss with one another. After two minutes, one line of students shifts one seat to the right, pairing with a new partner. The clock is reset, and a new topic is presented. “This exercise not only allows students an opportunity to practice English, but also learn about other cultures and perspectives from their classmates,” Abby said.

The faculty and staff at ELI help make this long-standing program at UCF a success. They embody a goal that is bigger than themselves and they are truly assets to the UCF community.

I always say, ‘you guys are my heroes’

- Abby McMillin, ELI Instructor | MA TESOL

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Global UCF

Global UCF alumna, Ximena Gonzalez, is halfway through her sophomore year and has already made a big impact at UCF.

By Emily Bombard

W ith a passion for drama, communication, and theatre, Gonzalez is pursuing her BA in Theatre Studies. Born in Venezuela, Ximenez joined Global UCF in Fall 2014 and distinguished herself as a hardworking and dedicated student.

While at Global UCF, Ximena became involved with Volunteer UCF and the UCF Alternative Break Program (ABP). She participated in many volunteering trips but felt the need to make a bigger impact to bridge international cultures and perspectives with American life. Ximena proposed “Making America More Global: Creating a Culturally Aware Generation,” a 2016 Spring Break ABP in partnership with Global UCF. She coordinated the logistics to launch a program for international students to travel to Washington D.C. where they lead a World Fair in two elementary schools to share culture, language, and information from their countries to inspire a new culturally aware generation.

She was also cast in the Life is a Dream Project, a collaboration between Theatre UCF and the Department of Modern Languages. The play was performed entirely in Spanish and she will be reprising the role in April 2016 at the Dr. Phillips Center.

Ximena credits the experience she had at Global UCF for giving her additional academic support and the time management and study skills to successfully balance and prioritize her social and academic life.

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/GLOBALATUCF /GLOBAL_UCF /GLOBALUCF
Exploring community issues through research

Dr. Timothy L. Hawthorne has recently joined the department of Sociology as an assistant professor specializing in geographic information systems and community geography. He sat down with IAGS to share his insights into the cutting-edge research that he has led for the past four years in Belize. The tropical location of coral reefs, orange and banana fields, and ruins in Belize aren’t everything on this trip - UCF students get to work alongside students and scholars from the University of Belize. They explore issues like marine debris, disaster planning, and utilizing agricultural resources. While students learn research skills in mapping technology, this trip involves an emotional and cultural change as well.

Dr. Hawthorne explained to IAGS how he was sitting among his students at an outdoor restaurant and he spontaneously drew a line in the sandy floor. He told his students that they would cross a line on this trip – that their experiences in Belize would change them. Many students described their time in Belize as crossing a personal threshold.

Draw a line in the sand, you are about to make a change.

Students were forced to confront their identity issues - emotionally and intellectually - to see life in a different way.

Dr. Hawthorne will introduce a new cohort of UCF undergraduate and graduate students to Belize this summer.

Japan Internship enriches UCF Abroad student experience

Michelle Alleman is an Event Management student at UCF’s Rosen College of Hospitality Management. In the summer of 2015, she spent three months in Okinawa, Japan working as an intern at the Kafuu Resort. “While many of the tasks in the hotel were similar to those in America,” Michelle said, “I was under far more pressure due to the fact that I was working with people from different countries who were accustomed to different gestures, customs and languages.”

Michelle spent time working in the front desk, the deli, and the upscale restaurant called “The Orange.” She said she enjoyed the challenges the experience presented and now has a better understanding of the differences in other cultures.

In the end, Michelle was grateful to UCF for affording her this opportunity. “I believe all students could benefit from working abroad because it teaches them to adapt to new experiences,” she said. Being able to interact with the people and take part in the culture as she did in this experience was a greater education than she had ever imagined.
Where Are They Now?

Dr. Raju Nagaiah, Ph.D., is not only a licensing associate in the UCF Office of Technology Transfer (OTT), he is an UCF Alumni. He grew up in a small village in India just outside of Bengaluru. Based on his family land available for collateral, he was able to get a loan to cover the costs of a single semester at UCF. His dream was to come to the United States and work for NASA.

Dr. Nagaiah arrived in the spring of 2002 and was able to work several part time jobs over the summer and save some money before landing an assistantship with UCF’s International Service Center (now International Affairs and Global Strategies).

“I am very grateful to [IAGS] for the assistantship, it helped me get started on a great path.”

Dr. Nagaiah earned three degrees in total from UCF including a master’s in Mechanical and Industrial Engineering as well as a doctorate in Industrial Engineering. Now as a licensing associate for OTT, Dr. Nagaiah handles patent assessments for the college of engineering, nanotech center, and other material science departments at UCF.

Although he did not get to work for NASA, Dr. Nagaiah believes his current work is even more important than what he may have done for NASA. His current work increases the likelihood that research or inventions from UCF will be properly protected, allowing these ideas or inventions to be fully developed and reach the marketplace.

Want to be featured in our next issue? Contact IAGScommunications@ucf.edu