

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

TARTANS ABROAD

STUDY ABROAD NEWSLETTER

ANDEE FISHER: EDITOR

Greetings from the Office of International Education!

Hello!

My name is Andee Fisher and I am currently in my fourth, and final, semester of my graduate program in Student Affairs in Higher Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. This degree allows me to fulfill my desire of working with college students. Through my program, I am not only interning in the Office of International Education here at CMU, but I am also currently finishing up a two year assistantship at Saint Vincent College in the area of Student Activities.

I had the opportunity to study abroad twice. I spent my freshmen-year spring break travelling through Paris with the honors program at my undergraduate institution. My second experience abroad was this past summer. I completed a three week study tour through England, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany. During this time I was able to compare the colleges and universities in Europe to those that we have here in the United States. It was very interesting to see how many differences there were! Although both of my times abroad were short, they were life changing. I am sure that you are starting to feel the same about your programs abroad.

As most of you are about halfway done with your programs, you are probably experiencing mixed emotions. You may be a little homesick or anxious for summer. At the same time, you may be having the time of your life and experiencing the feeling of never wanting to leave whichever country it is that you are studying in. Try not to let any of your emotions take control of you.

Remember that your time is going to eventually come to an end. Soak it all in and take advantage of every opportunity that you have now! I hope that each and every one of you has a great adventure and many stories with which to return home. Good luck with the rest of your semesters!

Andee Fisher
Graduate Intern
Office of International Education

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THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS
NEWSLETTER BY SHARING STORIES AND PHOTOS!

*"The world is a book and those who do
not travel read only one page."
~St. Augustine*

DENMARK: DMITRIY YAKUBOV

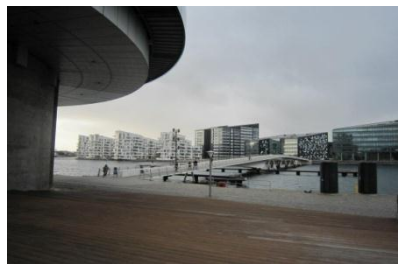
As the sky over the lake lost the last hints of pink and darkness completely enveloped the boathouse, I was gritting my teeth trying to loosen a rusty bolt on the outrigger of an Empacher single. It was late October, and with the sun setting around half past five and the water getting colder, the rowing season at Bagsvaerd Roklub was officially closed as I worked along with a few of my new teammates to ready the boats for winter storage. By that point I've been a member of the rowing club for about two months. I've made great friends and met world class athletes; I've competed in my first international regatta. I even picked up a little bit of Danish. In a very short amount of time I've become a member of the local rowing community, but then again that didn't really surprise me: on a certain level all rowers are members of the same tribe. What I was thinking about as I worked on the Empacher was what made me join the Bagsvaerd Roklub and not our rival Danske Stundenters Roklub which had been recruiting at the DIS Activities Fair and which I was considering for a while. Of course there were many different reasons for me to choose one club over another, but a single experience in my mind stood out as the point at which I decided to commit to Bagsvaerd.

It was a cold and rainy Saturday morning and my host dad Jesper and I were loading coolers with sandwiches and beverages into the car. I've been in Denmark for about a month at this point, and this morning we were heading roughly forty kilometers south into Sjælland: my host sister Rebecca, who started rowing just a few months back was to compete in her first regatta. Since I haven't made any real contact with the Danish rowing community at this point, I decided to come along and meet some rowers. I also figured this would be a good way to spend a day with my host family.

The trailer with boats was already parked and waiting to be unloaded when we arrived at the boathouse – a familiar sight to me.

We waited inside the clubhouse for more of Rebecca's teammates to arrive with their parents and when a critical mass had assembled Rasmus, the coach, who was at best three years older than me, said that it was time to get the boats unloaded and rigged for racing. This is when I realized the “problem” with the picture: back home we, the rowers, were responsible for rigging our boats; here with most rowers being between ten and thirteen years old, the task fell to their parents none of whom had ever been rowing. It fell to Rasmus, who as it turned out was managing a team at a competition, for the first time, to direct and supervise the entire process.

I don't know what exactly motivated me: perhaps it was the desire to be back in the thick of rowing, or maybe it was just a desire to land a hand, but I decided to jump in and help unload the fragile shells of the trailer. When the boats were off the trailer, Rasmus and I just kept going – showing the parents and the few kids that decided to pay attention how to attach the outriggers to boats, how to take the oars out of the trailer, how to carry the rigged boats to the water...



View of the Fiskertorv development in Copenhagen's South Harbor—taken from the Gemini Project by MVRDV.

Heavyweight 8+ at the Berlin Silver Belt Regatta (Dmitriv is seated 5th from the Bow)



Some three hours later I found myself standing on the dock alongside the parents, shivering, soaking wet from the rain, happily cheering on Rebecca and her boat mates as they made their way down the course.

It felt good to be back around the sport I've come to love so much, but aside from that feeling the regatta gave me the first good chance to interact with Danes outside of my host family. Those hours spent explaining how to properly carry boats and showing how to not over-tighten the bolts allowed me not only to pass along some knowledge I have acquired, but also showed me the side of Danish people I haven't seen before, while riding the S-Tog or walking down the streets of Copenhagen: openness to new ideas and cultures, willingness to learn, and a complete disregard for the language barrier that existed between us. I'm sure I would have encountered these qualities at any of the clubs that I was considering, but the families of the Bagsvaerd Roklub showed it to me first. In a matter of a few hours spent with them in the rain, they made me feel at home. From that point on I knew where I would be rowing.

**DMITRIY WON THE INTERCULTURAL LEADERSHIP AWARD FROM THE
DANISH INSTITUTE FOR STUDY ABROAD WITH THIS ESSAY!**

*"To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries."
~Aldous Huxley*



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EXPERIENCE!

There are plenty of ways to bring your experience abroad back when you return to Carnegie Mellon:

- Attend the Welcome Back Reception
- Help out with the Information Sessions and Pre-departure
- Serve as an e-peer advisor.
- Publish your journals, short stories, or poetry
- Enter the annual Photo Contest
- Use your experience as a springboard to complete a senior thesis
- Apply for a Fulbright, Rhodes, or Marshall scholarship
- Continue your experience with an international internship
- Write for the OIE's blog

WHILE YOU'RE ABROAD...

Check Out:

The Study Abroad Handbook:

www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/sab/before/handbook.html

Follow-Up SATC:

www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/sab/forms/index.html

Great travel products:

www.umabroad.umn.edu/products/index.html

Articles on returning home:

www.glimpseabroad.org/

Transfer Credit: Follow-Up SATCs

If you have made changes to your course registration abroad and have not already made arrangements with your academic advisor(s), please use this [Follow up SATC Form](#) to update your courses.

Please complete all categories, including URLs for specific courses. You will automatically receive an email with the changes you are proposing. Once we receive the completed form we will send it to relevant academic advisors. Advisors will review courses and send you confirmations of approval where appropriate.



REMEMBER!

To enroll yourself in CMU classes for next semester while you are overseas!!



CMU Study Abroad on Facebook

Click on the Study Abroad Facebook badge on the [Carnegie Mellon University Social Media Directory](#) or on [OIE's Study Abroad](#) page to become a fan! Our fan page consists of student and staff photos from abroad, including all photos and winners from the 2011 photo contest, the study abroad calendar of events, and discussion posting opportunities where students can talk about their overseas experiences and pre-and post-trip questions and thoughts.



Important Financial Aid Information

Attention, students! If you are interested in applying for federal aid for the 2012-2013 academic year, the deadline is

April 15, 2012, even if you are out of the country! More details are on the front page of the HUB website at <http://www.cmu.edu/hub>. Specific questions can be directed to your college contact, which is listed at the HUB website.

"When preparing to travel, lay out all your clothes and all your money. Then take half the clothes and twice the money."
~Susan Heller

SEVILLA, SPAIN: KIMBY JOSEPHSON

Today marks exactly 4 weeks spent in Sevilla. Oh how time flies.

For those who followed my Argentine adventures last summer— or anyone who knows how bad I am at riding a bike— you'll be excited to learn that I've purchased a year-long bike rental membership. There are stations all over the city where you can pick up or drop off one of the city bikes, and the first 30 minutes of any trip is free. Only 25 euros. Once my card comes in the mail I'll be visiting a nearby park and riding around in circles for a couple hours.

Friday morning I went on a 2-3 hour excursion to the nearby city of Itálica, which was abandoned after Roman rule. It was cool to see all of those old rocks, but unfortunately I didn't need 2 hours to see it all.

Friday night a few friends and I went out, wandered into a random pizzeria for water, and found old friendly folk to engage in Spanish conversation with. I also met an adorable puppy name León who was running around the little pizzeria and intermittently licking my face. We're going back tomorrow night for my friend's birthday, and I sure hope León will be there.

After departing from this pizzeria, we found a karaoke bar and went inside. That's all I'll say. Oh, and an elderly man really liked my friend's selection of a song and tried to steal the microphone during my performance.

Saturday I met my intercambio again, second time! He showed me more places to visit, including bars that bring free tapas with your drink orders. Then he took me to a place he's been going to since he was a little boy, and we had batidos—chocolate milkshakes. Delish (and expensive).

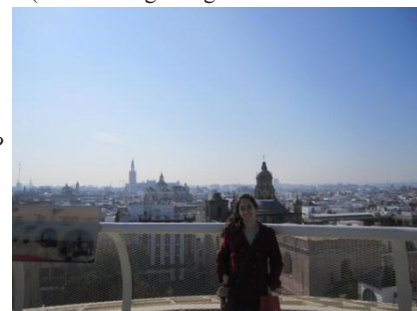


I took a tour with a group today through Alcázar (pictured left), the royal gardens/palace place where the king stays when he comes.

Yesterday (Sunday), a group from my program went on a "hike" about 1.5 hours north in an area called Sierra Norte. Really it was just a long walk through the woods, eventually coming out to some giant open mine canyon or something. It was cool, but very windy and cold.

Today was my first day observing/sitting in/helping out at the school as a part of my Teaching Development Program (TDP). I got there in time for class at 10 am with a 6th grade group and then had another with a 5th grade group at 10:45. I was with the teacher Trini today, and I do the same age groups (but different students) on Wednesday with a teacher named Sylvia. All I had to do was introduce myself to each class and answer some of their curious questions. Here is a compilation of the most commonly asked questions, and the answers I gave (even if I didn't have one):

- *Where are you from?* The United States, near the capital, Washington DC.
- *Is it cold?* Colder than in Spain
- *Who is your favorite singer?* Michael Jackson (They knew who he was, I couldn't think of anyone else)
- *Which Spanish futbol team do I like?* ALL OF THEM, OBVIOUSLY! (these kids have backpacks and notebooks dedicated to one particular team, I didn't want to make enemies early)
- *Do you have animals?* Yes, I have two cats (cue all 6th grade girls: "awwww!!!! I love cats")
- *Do you like Spain?* I love Spain!
- *What do you like to do in your free time?* ...Listen to music?
- *Do you have any brothers or sisters?* Yes, I have one sister. She is older. She is 25.
- *How old are you?* I am 20.
- *Who is your favorite actor?* Uhh.... (little boy says, George Clooney! And I say... yes, him!)



Here's proof I'm in Sevilla.

LIKE KIMBY'S STORY? FOLLOW HER BLOG, KIMBY TRAVELS, AT

KIMBYABROAD.TUMBLR.COM

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HER ADVENTURES IN SEVILLA!

"Traveling is almost like talking with men of other centuries"
~René Descartes

HAVANA, CUBA: JUAN ACOSTA

Yo gozando en La Habana

Describing my study abroad experience in Havana within the confines of a short article would be like trying to fit a yard of fabric through the eye of a needle. I'll try my best to give you enough for a scarf, though.

At first it almost feels as though there is too much culture in Cuba, which is extremely overwhelming. There are parks, neighborhoods (such as Chinatown), museums, monuments, eateries, clubs, and historical sites that are pulling you in different directions at once. But, I absolutely love it and would never have it any other way.

I am a descendent from a Cuban family and I grew up in what is most definitely the most Cuban city in all of the United States: Miami, Florida. I am a sucker for the white rice (*arroz blanco*), black beans (*frijoles negros*), shredded meat made with tomato sauce (*carne ripiada*) and fried sweet plantains (*maduros*), since that is what I grew up eating every week.

Havana is like Miami in some ways. For example, Cuban Miamians dress in a similar fashion that many Cubans in Havana dress: guido and guidette like. This translates to boisterous outfits featuring a million studs or rhinestones with an incomprehensible metallic pattern in a size too small. Yet, Cubans in Havana are much friendlier and more open than those in Miami. It is interesting to see both the parallels and divergences among both Cuban groups.

Cuba and Havana are much more than just cigars, rum, and Fidel Castro. They have an extremely lively and welcoming culture. These could very well be the reasons why retired, overly plump Europeans vacation here so often. I have literally stopped a person in the street, chatted with them for a minute or two, and exchanged telephone numbers with them without any hesitation.

The openness with which Cubans live their lives is beautiful. It is their norm, but a rarity to people from the United States. This openness also coincides with their ability to have fun regardless of where they are going or what they are doing. Whenever music is playing, Cubans can be found dancing, smiling, or singing along loudly. It is a magnificent and impressive sight.

However, as with any place you visit, there are aspects that may be less than stellar, but are still viable experiences. For instance, the group of girls from the University of Pittsburgh who I travelled with is cat-called and hollered at by men of all shapes, sizes, and ages whenever they are in public. However, this type of attention is often seen in the United States and is by no means specific to Havana.

Cat-calling aside, Havana is a bustling city with people who are always on the move from the break of dawn until after dusk. As such a city, it offers culture at every corner you visit. Cuban theatre, ballet, music, film, and art are precious components of this culture. Experiencing all of this first-hand has been very rewarding because it serves as a look into Cuban life through various perspectives. The high caliber of artistic value that Cubans have is inspiring, considering the fact that they are an economically underdeveloped country. Financial capital is not everything though.

Cuba massively invests in human capital. Education has been a priority in Cuba and as a result has received extraordinary government funding. Its enormous emphasis on education is unusual for its underdevelopment. It is interesting to be in a place where the person walking on the street next to you can very well be the vice dean of a college or a microbiology professor. There is a tone that all Cubans exhibit within their demeanor that makes revealing the professionals from the blue collar workers indecipherable. They tend to blend in together and carry themselves similarly; one culture.

Even though Cuba is surrounded by a polemic political history, it is not the center of their lives. Most Cubans prefer to salsa their way through life; working hard and playing much, much harder. I suggest you don't settle for anything less.

¡Azúcar!

Juan on the seawall, or El Malecón, in Cuba.



**JUAN IS THE FIRST CMU STUDENT TO STUDY IN CUBA
THROUGH THE PITT-IN-CUBA PROGRAM!**

"When you travel, remember that a foreign country is not designed to make you comfortable. It is designed to make its own people comfortable."
~Clifton Fadiman

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What if my courses abroad change?

Students must often make changes to their coursework abroad due to cancelled classes or time conflicts. Because this happens so frequently, OIE has developed a simple procedure for gaining new course approvals abroad. Students who have made changes to their course registration abroad should use the Follow-up SATC Form found online to update their courses with their academic advisors.

2) What else do I need to do while abroad?

- While away from Pittsburgh, students remain registered at Carnegie Mellon and are encouraged to stay in touch with academic advisors and OIE for course changes and other important information.
- Register with the US (or your home country) **Embassy** and sign up for warden messages.
- Check the OIE website and emails from the department regarding special opportunities such as 5th year scholar, honor society nominations, and other important deadlines that may occur while students are away.

3) What if something happens to me while I'm abroad?

The OIE staff is a valuable resource for students and parents throughout the study abroad experience. Should students have any serious problems or emergencies overseas, we are happy to assist in any way we can. Students should first contact their study abroad program as they are on the ground and can be of more immediate assistance.

4) What do students do if they get homesick?

Adjusting to a new culture is both exciting and challenging and there are moments when students feel out of place. Check out the Study Abroad Handbook for a detailed explanation of cultural adjustment and ideas of how to overcome homesickness.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office of International Education

Phone: 412-268-5231

Email: goabroad@andrew.cmu.edu

<http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/oie/>

Counseling & Psychological Services

Phone: 412-268-2922

<http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/counseling>

Housing Office, Lisa Hartman

Phone: 412-268-2139

Email: ldippold@andrew.cmu.edu

<http://www.housing.cmu.edu>

HUB & Financial Aid

Phone: 412-268-8186

Email: thehub@andrew.cmu.edu

<http://www.cmu.edu/hub/>

UC Information Desk

Phone: 412-268-2107

HELPFUL LINKS

Center for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

Disability Travel Resources

<http://www.makoa.org/travel.htm>

GLBT Resources

www.gaytimes.co.uk/HotSpots/GayGuide.html

Let's Go Travel Resource

www.letsgo.com

Pittsburgh Post Gazette

www.post-gazette.com/

Sexual Assault Advisors

www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/SAA

The Tartan

<http://www.thetartan.org/>

Travel Advisory Notices

www.travel.state.gov

Women's Resources

<http://userpages.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links.html>

www.cmu.edu/studyabroad

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